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Personality of the month

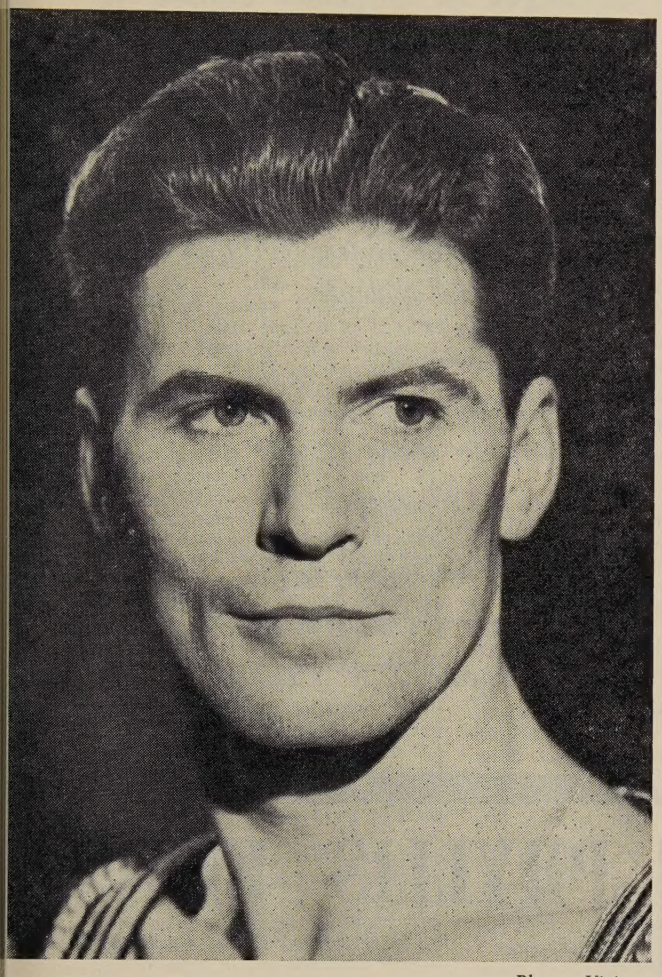

Photo: Vivienne

MICHAEL SOMES

is just 20 years, and a whole history of British ballet, ago when Michael Somes danced his first principal rôle for the National llet. The occasion was the première of Ashton's *Horoscope*, and young Somes was partnering the equally young Fonteyn. Looking ck it can now be seen how fully the hopes raised by that partnerp have been fulfilled, but the way for Somes has never been easy.

Like many male dancers of his generation Somes's career was iously retarded by the war years, and in his case the situation was rsened by a series of accidents which further held back his natural velopment. It was in 1950, when he was 33 years old, that he ally attained the position of *premier danseur étoile* to the Royal llet. This proved to be a turning-point for British ballet, and mes's reign has seen far-reaching changes in the Royal company.

His influence has made itself felt principally in two directions. It ms most doubtful whether the genius of Fonteyn could have come full flower without a cavalier who could not only partner her peccably, but also match her femininity with virility.

Yet his influence on the younger generation of male dancers was less profound. At last they had a dancer at the head of the company o, like Dolin before him, conformed to the normally accepted ndards of *premier danseur*. Somes is not a "natural" dancer in the y of a Gilpin. His shoulders are heavy, his neck is short, he has stiff, unyielding back and somewhat weak insteps. Yet for years, rd work and application forced his dancing to improve. He always pt a few jumps ahead of his younger colleagues, continually in the efront of the ever-rising level of male dancing. Now, as a techian, he is no longer without equal in the company, yet he is still superlative stylist. Underrated by nearly everyone except his leagues, Somes by his example has self-effacingly and almost unticeably slipped into a position that can be compared with that cupied in the Imperial Russian Ballet by the great Pavel Gerdt.

April 1958 9th YEAR OF PUBLICATION Vol. 9 No. 4

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS *Associate Editor:* CLIVE BARNES

Assistant Editor: E. C. MASON

WORLD'S LARGEST SALE IN THE FIELD

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A Shot In The Arm

THE Sagan ballet—*The Broken Date* (*Le Rendez-vous Manqué*)—in the greatest blaze of ballet publicity encountered in the past thirty years, possibly in this century, has come, been seen, though it hardly could be said to have conquered. Many thousands of people have borne with it, loved it and loathed it. But whatever your personal opinion it must be admitted that there can hardly have been a person in the British Isles who has been able to ignore its presence amongst us.

Everyone, loving the art of ballet at its highest, has every right to air or write his honest adverse opinion of the enterprise —and many people have done just that thing. It is also possible to sympathize fully with those ballerinas who have privately expressed their horror that the press should devote considerable space and even serious criticism to a work of this kind when the great works of ballet's art are frequently dismissed in a few lines or not even considered at all. Dancers and choreographers who have devoted their lives to the perfection of their chosen profession might well wonder in what direction ballet is going if something so insipid can create such a furore.

While fully understanding all the righteous indignation of these people there is, however, another side to this picture which we can hardly afford to ignore. Firstly this ballet has been brought to the notice of thousands of people who had previously dismissed it as a dreary egg-head art and out of that number there may be a considerable percentage who might have been inspired to explore ballet's further possibilities—they might even go to Covent Garden or Festival Hall. Secondly, the Sagan ballet has caused more stir, gossip and controversial discussion than anything that has happened in the theatre for some time.

My own feelings are that these two factors can do nothing but good to the art of ballet as a whole but it was a pity that such a molehill of a ballet emerged from such a mountain of publicity.

However high-minded we may be about ballet's ultimate perfection there is no doubt that it cannot survive without an audience. The more the word "ballet" is dinned into the brains of a potential audience the more chance there is of the art's survival. Excitement is vital to the theatre, and to ballet more than any of the various arts which take place in it, and excitement has been sadly lacking of late. Without the occasional stimulus of the hullabaloo which surrounds a work such as *The Broken Date*, ballet could easily sink back to becoming too esoteric and too academic for anyone but the faithful few.

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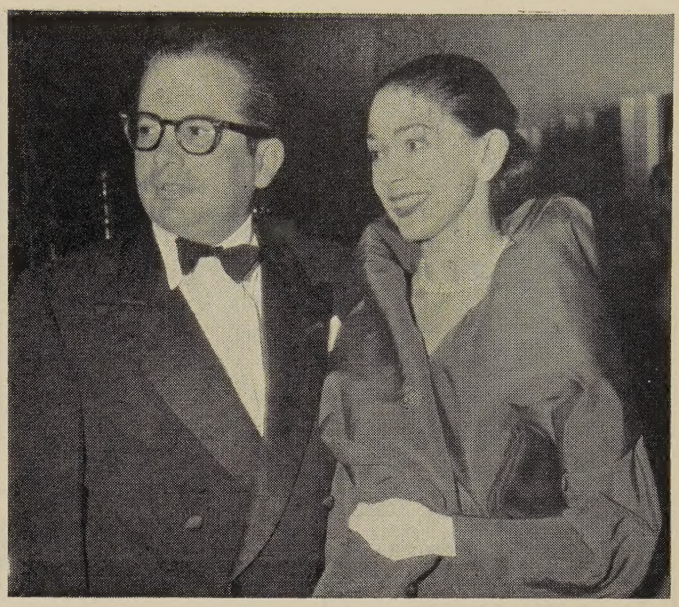
or Second Thoughts on Sagan



BALLERINA IN ATTENDANCE: Dame Margot Fonteyn, in a red taffeta coat, arrives with her husband, Dr. Roberto Arias, in the foyer of the Dominion Theatre. Together with about 4,000 *other people they were there to see the London première of Françoise Sagan's much-publicised ballet*–The Broken Date.

THE journey from my flat in Eaton Square to any theatre in London is as methodically ned as any progress made by the Royal mily; it is planned, and so far has never led, that I arrive in the theatre about five nutes before the curtain goes up. On the ening night of Sagan's *The Broken Date* at e Dominion Theatre in London, on Feb- ary 18, this plan went rather haywire The uble started in Charing Cross Road where traffic seemed to have been brought to a rmanent halt. At St. Giles Circus, where aring Cross Road crosses Oxford Street, aos reigned—all London seemed to be con- rging on one spot. The police were struggling hold back the vast crowds and entrance to e theatre was not helped by the serried ranks photographers, ranged like a school group the pavement under the awning. Inside e door, everyone was milling around a wer-laden sarcophagus which one wit scribed as being "the last mortal remains of gan." Progress was slow through the eatre as every member of the public seemed tent on being seen—white ties, black ties, cks, trapezes and sweaters pushed and shoved a happy pell-mell which would have de- hted the witty and satirical pen-and-wash of Rowlandson.

Inside the auditorium things were quieter cept that the attendants seemed incapable showing people to their seats which led to rther looking and scuffling while everyone atched the numbers on their tickets to the tual seats. Lord and Lady Harewood rrived in a sizzle of flash bulbs which got en brighter for the arrival of Lord Milford aven and Eva Bartok.

We waited and waited, and to pass the time e photographers concentrated on the Rank arlets who attended in full force. Across the sle from where I was sitting I noticed that out six seats were empty, by this time the nly unoccupied ones in the theatre. Was it ese people we were waiting for? Rumour as rife that they were either for Princess Margaret or Françoise Sagan herself.

At twenty minutes past the scheduled time r the curtain to rise there was a commotion the aisle and the flashes started anew— ritain's two great ballerinas arrived at the me time. Dame Margot Fonteyn and her usband, Dr. Arias, chatted self-consciously Alicia Markova and her escort the Danish ancer, Borge Ralov. And—if you want to now—Fonteyn wore a full red taffeta coat ver a black taffeta dress while Markova had mink coat over her black lace draped with lack chiffon. They filled up four of the empty eats—but still we waited. Five minutes later here was a clattering as of chain-mail and Liz aylor arrived with Mike Todd. In a grey Iartnell dress, so heavily encrusted with jewels nd sequins as to make her every move audible rom several yards away, she and her husband noved into the two empty seats. This was, pparently, the signal for the performance to egin. For the first time in history a British heatre audience was kept waiting for two eople who were not Royalty. But British oyalty, Americans and film stars might note, ave the good manners *never* to keep a theatre udience waiting.

The audience were not rewarded for their igil by the announcement that Vladimir kouratoff's ankle was again giving him rouble and that his rôle, a rôle upon which he whole ballet hinges, would be danced by he choreographer John Taras.

Last month when I wrote about the world première of *Le Rendez-vous Manqué* in Monte Carlo, I said, as indeed I had most emphatically been told, that there would be drastic changes in the ballet before the London opening. A few changes there were but no changes that could in any way be called—drastic.

The first two acts are now telescoped into one and the main benefit to be derived from this is that the audience *is* spared an interval during which they can tell each other how weak the first act really is. It is, I am afraid, very weak indeed. The divertissement of Roses has unimaginative choreography and is still danced without much polish. In this section an attempt is made to introduce Toni Lander, as the Young Woman for whom the Young Man is waiting, who otherwise does not appear until the last act. In an *adage* and *variation* she appears as "The Vision of the Young Woman as a Rose." It certainly adds some much-needed distinguished dancing to this scene but it does nothing to tighten up Sagan's stretched-to-the-limit story. In a grey dress and supported by several partners in turn she drifts around the stage, but the fact that it is all so classical causes it to fit untidily into the ballet as a whole. By far the best thing in this act is still the "Dance of the Hands of the Clock" by Edith Allard and Bill Lundy; it has the expressive modern idiom which is far more suited to the contemporary nature of the ballet.

Between scenes one and two, Buffet has designed a new cut-cloth intended to be another part of the room. This is now the background to the eccentric *entrée* of uninvited guests for the Surprise Party. This innovation is a great improvement on the original idea and it was at this point, on the first night at any rate, that the ballet started to come to life. This leads naturally into the large scene which follows and the jive and rock 'n' roll was improved by the appearance of Don Lurio, who choreographed this section. Dressed in pyjamas he gave a most spirited exhibition of eccentric dancing. The famous bathroom scene is still as innocuous as it was after it had been cleaned up in Monte Carlo for the benefit of Prince Rainier and Princess Grace Patricia. I should not think that one member of the Dominion audience was even remotely shocked by it. Out of it all, it was still that delicious vamp, Noëlle Adam, who dominated the scene. The most noticeable improvement of all was Michel Magne's new orchestration of the score which in the second scene became an effective jazz accompaniment to the high-spirited gyrations of the Surprise Party guests.

The interval sent everyone scurrying from their seats to see and be seen but they all rather lost their sense of direction when they could not find a bar though apparently there was one hidden away somewhere. Lord Milford Haven spent most of the time looking for Eva Bartok's lipstick while she sucked orangeade through a straw. General opinion of the first act was divided by about 75% against and 25% in favour. The world of ballet in general, and that included the famous ballerinas, was shocked—not by anything to do with Sagan's story but by the fact that a work of such little merit should have been awarded the greatest publicity ballyhoo of any ballet in the present century. Those in favour, mainly consisting of people who just go to the theatre to enjoy themselves, found that they were in fact—enjoying themselves.

The only changes in the second act were the new drop-cloths by Buffet, which were charming, and a slightly different ending when the Young Man, on his death, did not roll on the floor. Toni Lander did not, as in Monte Carlo, appear in the final scene in a Balmain evening dress which always seemed to me to be a strange garment for crossing the Atlantic by air; she now has a simple travelling dress. The high spot of this act is, as it was previously, her love scene with the Young Man. I still think she is miscast in this rôle but she dances beautifully and her interpretation has developed and she probably provides an admirable contrast to the sexy Noëlle Adam.

The best thing that one can say about John Taras as the Young Man was that he bravely saved the show. Considering he has not danced for some years and was completely out of training it was remarkable that he got through the rôle as he did. He must have known that he was entirely unsuited to the rôle, but that if the show was to go on he was the only person who knew the choreography. Such gestures in the theatre are only to be admired but there was no escaping the fact that without Skouratoff most of the ballet's male physical attraction evaporated completely.

Another disappointment was provided by the dreadful lighting and hanging of Buffet's sets. Nor were they helped by a plum and gold false proscenium, presumably part of the Dominion's decoration, forming a very noticeable and unsuitable frame. The audience must have got a very poor impression of these

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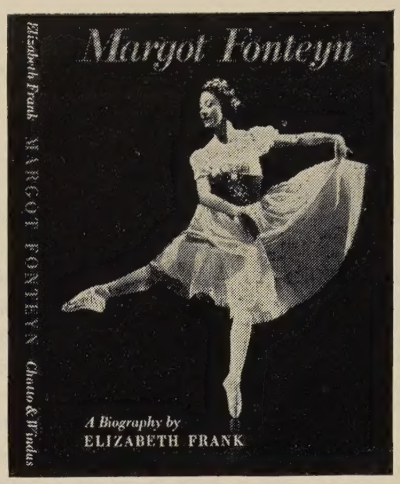

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Elastic belt with nylon string

dotable designs which looked so good in Monte Carlo. Why, one wonders, when such trouble had been taken to make props—the sofa, chairs and the piano—have the texture of a buffet painting was the same treatment not given to the costumes? Apart from Noëlle Adam's lilac sweater and black tights, the costumes were so undistinguished as to be inoffensive. Surely by this time people have realized that flagrantly everyday clothes will never look right in stylized settings? If so much money was spent on publicity it would have been better to have spent a little more on bringing the sets and costumes into line. As it is now, the general effect is makeshift and shoddy.

The work was finally greeted with a surprising amount of warmth and even cheers. The audience tried to get out of the theatre but this was made extremely difficult owing to the vast crowds who had assembled in the foyer doubtless hoping to see the film star who had held the curtain for 25 minutes. The result was that it took a good half-hour to get from the front of the stalls to the street where a cordon of police were feverishly trying to hold back even greater crowds. There is not the slightest doubt that this ballet first night had justly earned its "fabulous" title. Lord Harewood was reported as having said, when asked what he thought about the ballet: "I thought it rather jolly."

Peter Williams

—and some First Thoughts

IT'S no use! I know as well as my next colleague that the "completely and entirely brand-new era in dance entertainment" which opened with the unveiling of *Le Rendez-vous Manqué* requires a "completely and entirely brand-new" critical approach. But I am too old a dog to learn new tricks, consequently being constitutionally incapable of working out a gimmick fit to match this remarkable work, I hope I may be forgiven for clinging to the now clearly outworn traditions of the magazine.

LE RENDEZ-VOUS MANQUÉ

First given in London by the Ballet-Théâtre Français at the Dominion Theatre on February 18, 1958. "Created" by Françoise Sagan. Choreography by John Taras and Don Lurio. Music by Michel Magne. Production by Roger Vadim. Décor by Bernard Buffet.

CAST: *Le Ballet-Théâtre Français.*

STORY: Victorian—with 1920's bedroom interest. Middling boy meets middling girl and bad girl. Passion—Betrayal—Nostalgia—Passion—Suicide . . .

PRODUCTION: Amateurish.

SEX INTEREST: Disappointing.

CHOREOGRAPHY: Negligible.

DANCING: Toni Lander—Wasted. John Taras—Ineffective. Noëlle Adam—If this is the sort of thing you like, this is the sort of thing you will like; I did.

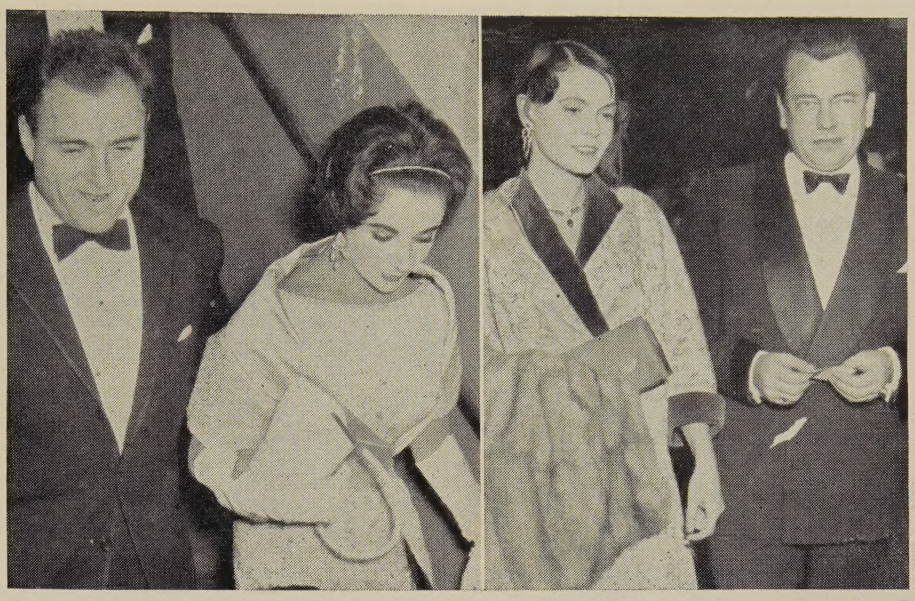
MUSIC: Derivative.

DECOR: The somewhat cold Buffet proved to be the work's most appetizing feature.

PUBLICITY: Magnificent.

TO turn aside from objective criticism, and to add a few subjective remarks, I must say I admired *Le Rendez-vous Manqué* enormously. I always admire success, and this ballet has quite clearly stirred up more interest than any dance event since the visit of the Bolshoi Ballet.

Acres of newsprint and gallons of printers' ink have gone to commemorate its existence. That, in any language, spells success. That perhaps only a little more than 99% of all the words written about the ballet have been in some degree uncomplimentary is of small importance. It has got itself talked about, and that is its great achievement. That its sponsors have done so remarkably well with such a bad ballet makes one wonder what they might have done with a good ballet. It could have been awe-inspiring!



FILM STARS ARRIVE: Left, Elizabeth Taylor, whose late arrival caused the curtain to be held for 25 minutes, hurries in with her husband, Mike Todd. Right, Eva Bartok, escorted by Lord Milford Haven, added glamour to an evening notable for its glamour.

To treat this silly work with a good deal more seriousness than its artistic merits deserve, more or less everything that might be said in the way of criticism has been covered by Peter Williams in reviewing the work at its Monte Carlo première in last month's issue.

The story—based on a suggestion or idea by Françoise Sagan—is basically not entirely unsuitable for a conventional romantic ballet. The flashback device in the narrative is certainly cumbersome, and the story itself is probably too slight to sustain a whole evening's interest. In any case such quality, small though it may have been, that the story had was vitiated by the inadequacy of the choreographic treatment and production.

John Taras in the past has generally shown himself to be a competent rather than truly inspired choreographer. So far as his works shown in England go (and, admittedly, these are only a small part of his prolific total output), he may perhaps be evaluated as an often tasteful, musical and sometimes pleasing but hardly front-line artist. In this present work, apart from the bedroom *pas de deux*, for Lander and the Young Man, he seems unable to attain his own amiable standards.

Don Lurio, selected to play Petipa to Taras's Ivanov, was responsible for the dances in the rock 'n' roll episode of the wild, wild party. He appeared to have a fair command of most of the more obvious clichés of American musical comedy dancing, some of them going right back to the 'thirties. Yet what was really distressing about the work's choreographic conception was the old-fashioned approach it showed to ballet. In what is supposedly a realistic ballet—I seem to remember that the advance publicity and its few critical sponsors made quite a play of the ballet's realism—one hardly expects to find flowers coming to life, flames coming to life or even romantic, phantasmagoric figures urging the hero to suicide. Naively, so it appears, I had thought that these kind of things had become outdated by the end of the 19th century. But perhaps not in Paris.

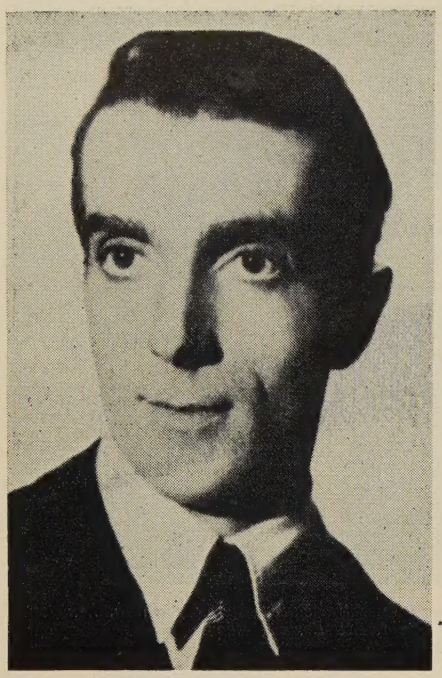
There is no doubt that the ballet's performance was seriously marred by the unavoidable substitution of John Taras for the indisposed Vladimir Skouratoff. Taras acted bravely, but even in his youth this would hardly have been the part for him, and no one could suggest that his stage presence has the same quality and animal virility possessed by Skouratoff, and so lacking in the balance of the ballet's performance. It seemed to me, the only emotion he showed during the course of the evening was during the course of his curtain call when he had the grace to appear surprised—possibly at the gentle warmth of his reception.

To see the exquisite Toni Lander in this fiddle-faddle was nothing more than sad. Here is a dancer who, if there was any justice in the world, would be a ballerina with one of the great state companies (preferably, England's!), doing sexy contortions devoid of art and even bare of interest. Noëlle Adam has very pretty legs and is rather a peach. Don Lurio, whose name was not given on a programme which otherwise was almost prodigal with its information, made a far better impression as a grotesque comedy dancer than as a comically grotesque choreographer. It seemed bad luck that the programme's error deprived him of his press notices.

Michel Magne's score, the musical accompaniment to the ballet, was a very undistinguished piece of work, pretentious and eclectic. Although it places a strain upon credulity, I am told that it has been improved since the ballet's first performance in Monte Carlo. Buffet's wan settings with their customary crepuscular charm I found pleasing.

Bad kings are often as important in history as good kings, and because *Le Rendez-vous Manqué* is a bad ballet should not blind us to the fact that historically it is far from insignificant. It was a ballet produced for the general public and sold to the general public. It can be said that there were elements in this salesmanship that were in questionable taste, although even these were only a logical extension of the methods previously used to beat up interest in certain other ballets, for example some of those by Roland Petit. It is unfortunate, in the event, that all the ballet-hoo surrounded such a poor mouse of a work. Yet as a person interested in ballet, and not unmindful of my bread-and-butter, I cannot altogether condemn an enterprise which for some months has shone a bright spotlight on to the art, or at least the cult, of ballet. On the principle that all publicity is good publicity, perhaps we high-minded devotees of the dance secure in our ivory towers can in some way make capital out of this Sagan saga.

Clive Barnes



LEONIDE MASSINE: A recent portrait of the famous Russian dancer and choreographer

LEONIDE MASSINE
demonstrates
Red Indian Dancing

A few years ago, Massine made an intense study of American Red Indian dancing. The result of his research has been shown in the many demonstration-lectures he has given all over Europe. The great sixty-four-year-old Russian dancer has shown in these demonstrations that his remarkable agility and powers of expression remain untouched by the years. Here are pictures of the demonstration and a summary of the text of his lecture recently taken down by ALDO GIOVANNETTI in Rome.

THE first time I attended Massine's lecture on American Red Indian dances, during last year's festival at Nervi, I went to it in the belief that it would be just like any other lecture; too late I realized my big mistake but it was impossible to do anything about it. Though afterwards I asked Massine for a copy of his text and he very politely promised he would let me have one—he unfortunately soon forgot about it. Therefore, when I recently received an invitation from the American Embassy in Rome to attend another of these lectures, I went fully armed. Provided with a pen and several sheets of paper, I made sure that I would try and get down whatever the great choreographer had to say about this very interesting subject. I took down what he said more or less literally and arranged for a photographer to make as many pictures as possible so that we should be able to get a visual impression of Massine demonstrating the various Indian dance movements. It was this actual demonstration which impressed the public in Rome, as indeed it had at the Nervi festival.

In the little Usis Theatre, in the Via Veneto, before an elegant audience, under blinding spot lights and without any decorative element or theatre magic to help him, Massine remarkably re-created the atmosphere of the Red Skin dance.

It has been said that the dance of the "Indios" has something indefinable, something intangible in it which nobody can really reproduce. But somehow I felt that Massine had discovered, and knew how to reveal, this secret. He never said how long he stayed in the Indian villages of America but it is obvious that he dedicated himself to the study of this form of dance art with the same profound love and vigorous passion which he has previously demonstrated in his study of the classical dance, the folklore and national dances of various other countries in the world, and indeed every other kind of dance manifestation past and present.

Differing from the Oriental Chinese and Indian dances which give great importance to gesture and mime as well as to the movement of the facial muscles, the dance of the Indios is essentially based on the movements of the feet while the body is characterized by angular positions. Seldom is an arm completely extended or a leg lifted with the foot on point. When one part of the body is extended, the other part is bent and this always gives an impression of angularity.

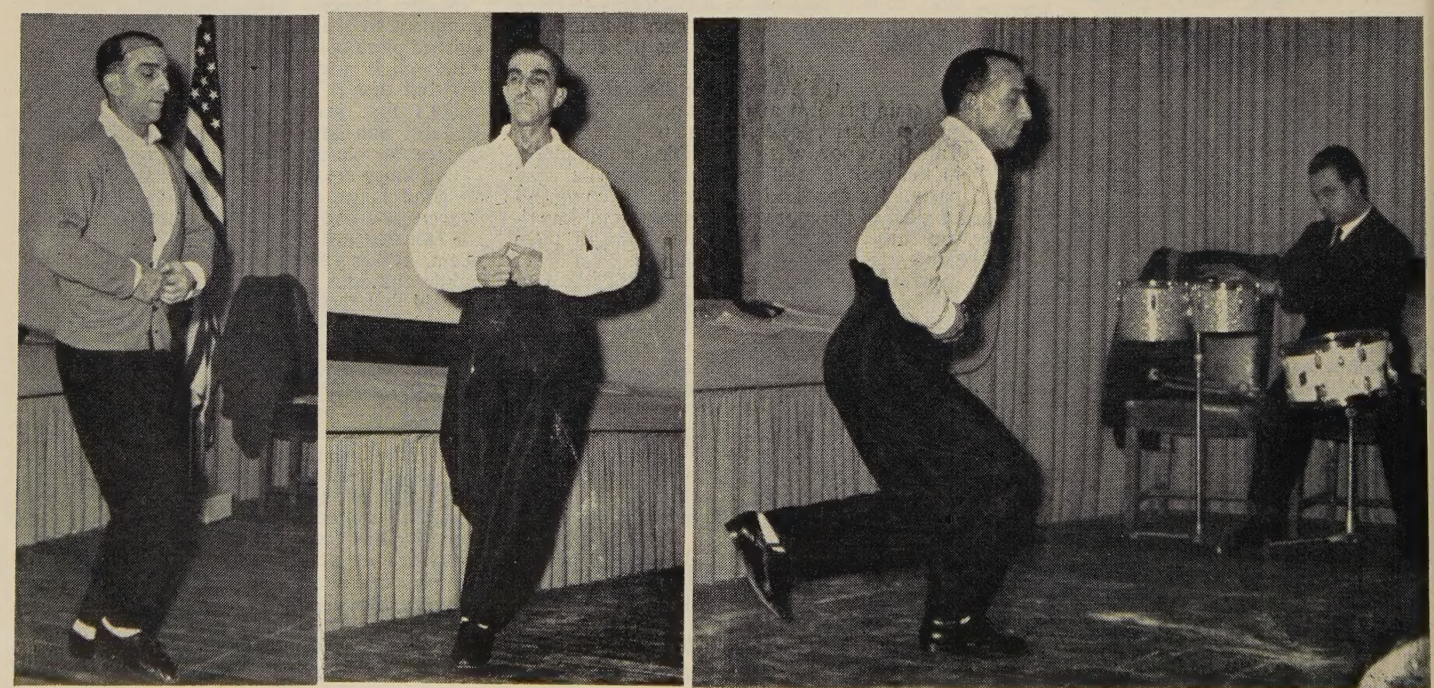
For this reason, the first pioneers in America who saw Red Indian dancing and who were conversant with the greater refinements of Oriental dancing, called the Red Skin dancing a "frantic jumping," "jumping around in the most funny positions" or "savage movements." In actual fact Massine considers Red Indian dancing to be the most ancient of all dance forms and the mother of all European folk-dance.

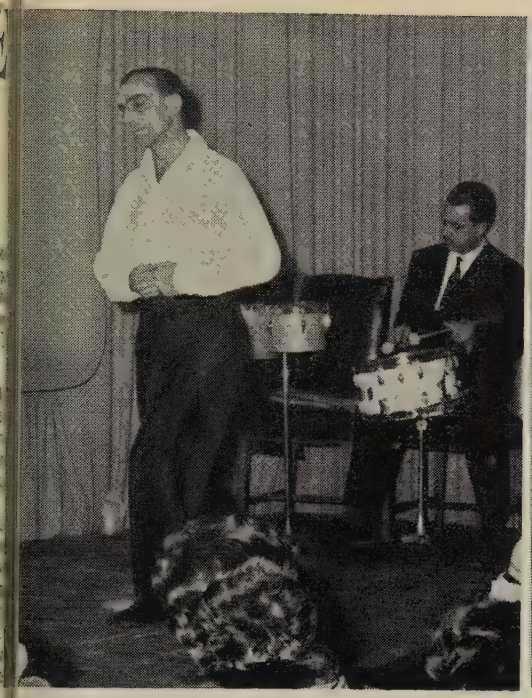
Though all the steps are mainly improvised and do not adhere to any strict choreographic rule, the postures, movements and rhythms of the Red Indian dances are extremely complicated and require very hard training. They appear simple and improvised but this is because they have to be so skilfully danced.

It is indeed strange that until today, few anthropologists have shown any interest in this form of dance, though other forms of Red Indian art—painting and sculpture—have been considered and admired everywhere. But until Massine started to delve into this form of dance, nobody paid much attention to it. Yet it is quite possibly the most complete aesthetic expression of any race of people in the world.

The Hopi Hatchis group of dancers, those of the Pueblo Eagle and of the Northern plains,

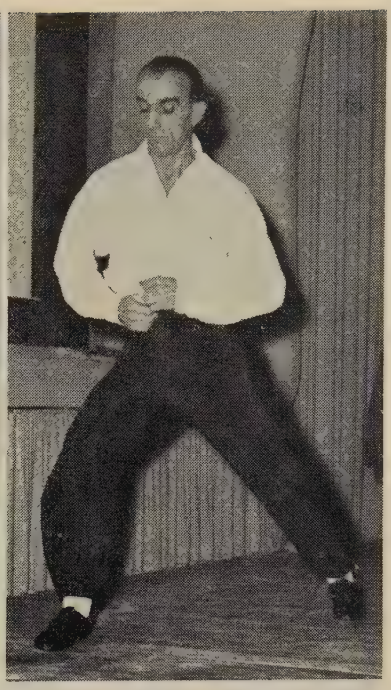
MASSINE STARTS: With his hands clenched in front, Massine starts each dance. Left, *point and heel. The movement has a great similarity to a Spanish* Zapateado. Middle, *the foot goes tap-tap and then the heel is lowered.* Right, *the dance called Buffalo.*





PASSO: Left, *balance.*

Middle, *a half* pirouette.



Right, *a pivot is followed by a lunge forward.*

how in their dance an innate dramatic genius. Some of the dances are performed only by men, others only by women. Some are danced without any particular costume, others with costumes and masks to increase their mystery. The moccasin shoes, the little bells and the eagle wings have as great an importance in the "Pow-wow" of the forest regions as that of the music from a single percussion instrument and the chanting. All these things are an integral part of the dance itself. The important Tom-Tom drum is the actual director of the dance and determines the rhythms.

The inspiration of these dances is more or less the same as those subjects which inspire folk dances in every other country—religious matters, incidents in daily life, famine, pestilence, war, or the various humorous incidents which make up the life of any race.

Contrary to most other national dances, the Red Indians dance with their arms remaining in a relaxed position most of the time. In a way rather similar to the arms in Irish folk dances which are rarely used. The most common use of the arms is to accentuate the movements of the rest of the body.

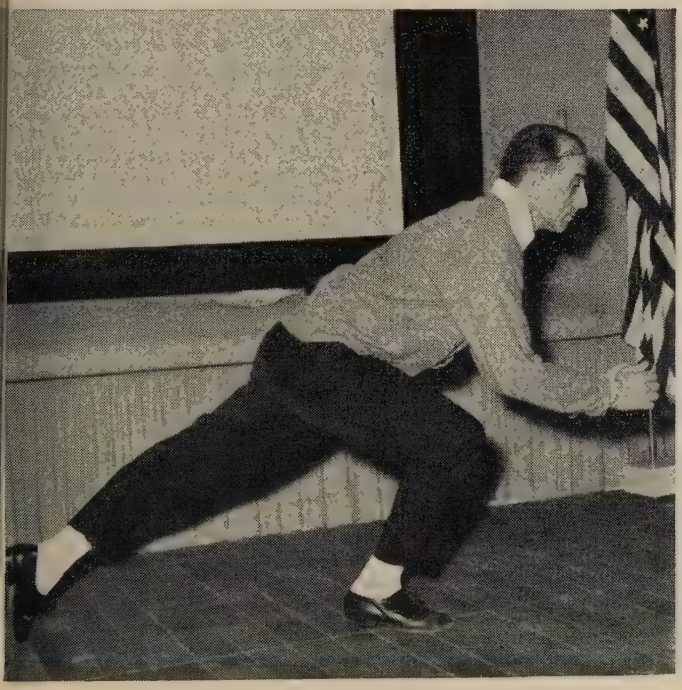
The Indians of the forests and those of the Northern Plains dance with their arms bent, almost meeting in the centre of their chests, and their fists clenched as in the photograph on the opposite page. Movements of great angularity correspond with a greater dramatic impact. Most of the time, however, the body is held erect and is very seldom inclined forward. There are three main positions of the body—erect, flexed and semiflexed. The erect position denotes tranquillity. The flexed position, achieved by bending the body forward at an angle of 30 degrees, denotes various states of mind. The semiflexed position, used for dances of the earth, is limited to a single spot on the ground.

The head, in Red Indian dancing, does not follow any rule. It can be used in any way desired and depends on the nature or character of each particular dance or dancer and the same thing goes for the expression of the face. When dancing in the "Pow-wow" of the forest regions, the dancers smile without ever parting their lips. Their dance is the most serene of all and everything they do expresses the pure joy of the dance.

(*To be continued*)

This article will be concluded in the May number and there will be a portfolio of unique pictures of Massine demonstrating the various steps.

Continued: Left, *Point, bring down heel, beat and bring down heel.*



Middle, *A Strong Dance.*

Right, *land on the flat foot, crossed over.*

CORCORAN CADETS: Allegra Kent leading the corps de ballet *in the First Campaign from the Balanchine-Sousa ballet,* Stars and Stripes.

Stars and Stripes

First given by New York City Ballet at New York City Center Theatre on January 17, 1958. Ballet in five campaigns dedicated to the memory of Fiorella H. La Guardia. Choreography by George Balanchine. Music adapted and orchestrated by Hershy Kay after music by John Philip Sousa. Scenery by David Hays. Costumes by Karinska.

FIRST CAMPAIGN:
1st Regiment, *Corcoran Cadets*
ALLEGRA KENT and *Corps de Ballet*

SECOND CAMPAIGN:
2nd Regiment, *Thunder and Gladiator*
ROBERT BARNETT and *Corps de Ballet*

THIRD CAMPAIGN:
3rd Regiment, *Rifle Regiment*
DIANA ADAMS and *Corps de Ballet*

FOURTH CAMPAIGN:
Liberty Bell and *El Capitan*
MELISSA HAYDEN
JACQUES D'AMBOISE

FIFTH CAMPAIGN:
Stars and Stripes
ALL REGIMENTS

THUNDER AND GLADIATOR: Robert Barnett leading the male dancers of the company in the Second Campaign.

THE fourth and final new work choreographed by George Balanchine for the New York City Ballet's season was premiered three days before the company closed its engagement prior to preparing for their first tour of the Far East.

Based on band music by John Philip Sousa that has been marvellously orchestrated by Hershy Kay, this ballet resembles nothing more nor less than a Fourth of July stage show that might have been presented at the Radio City Music Hall. The costumes, naturally, are red, white and blue and wonderful, since they are by Karinska. The dance movements are based on parade formations with much strutting and marching. (One member of the audience with a long memory remarked that this ballet was reminiscent of another composed to "Marche Militaire" by George Balanchine when he was with the Diaghilev company in 1925.) Its most exciting section is the one in which Melissa Hayden and Jacques d'Amboise toss off bravura technical feats. Most memorable, however, is the second section where there is a brisk and bouncing marching formation for Robert Barnett and twelve men of the *corps de ballet*. This is the first time within memory that Balanchine has composed a section of a ballet specifically for men and it is excellently designed, fits the talents of these men admirably and is danced in a rousing fashion.

This ballet ends with a replica of the American flag being raised at the back of the stage. While all of this adds up to a rather sophisticated and witty handling of patriotic subject matter, it is still rather corny, though on a high level, and it might easily be misunderstood abroad. Although it is rumoured that this ballet was planned as the closing work for the Far Eastern tour programmes, it is hoped that it will not be taken because such a joke is not exportable and is bound to be misunderstood. Since a key figure from the United Nations has also suggested that *Stars and Stripes* be left at home, it now appears unlikely that it will be seen outside of America.

Arthur Todd

Balanchine's other recent creation, *Gounod Symphony*, is reviewed by Arthur Todd on page thirty-one

FRENCH VERSION: The full stage, showing Jean-Denis Maillart's setting, of Harald Lander's version of Ravel's ballet at the Paris Opéra. The two principals, Claire Motte and Alexandre Kalioujny, are seen centre. A close-up of these two dancers, in a pas de deux, *is shown in the picture below right.* *Photos: Lido*

La Valse — in France and Italy

at the Paris Opera

Poème chorégraphique pour orchestre **by Maurice Ravel. Given at the Paris Opéra on January 24. Choreography by Harald Lander. Décor and costumes by Jean-Denis Maillart.**

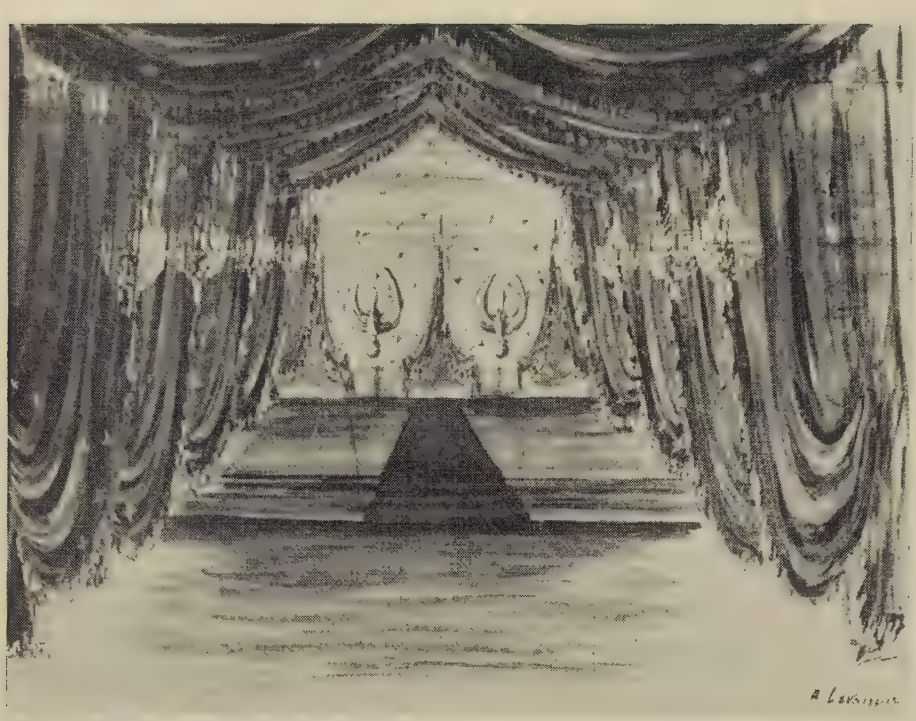
The Young Girl — CLAIRE MOTTE
The Prince — ALEXANDRE KALIOUJNY
Cavaliers — MM. DUTHOIT, MAYER, DUFLOT

and *corps de ballet*

COMMISSIONED by Diaghilev, *La Valse* was written in 1920, but, as everyone knows and to the great displeasure of its composer, it was never given by the Diaghilev Ballet Russe. To commemorate the 20th anniversary of Ravel's death, it was natural that an attempt should be made to stage this much-loved work at the Paris Opéra. However, we must confess that it reminds us again of Diaghilev's caution and enlightened judgment, for it shows the genuine difficulty of transposing this light dream to the stage without making it heavy.

Maurice Ravel himself outlined his main idea very clearly. "I have imagined this work," he said, "as a kind of climax to the Viennese waltz in which I have mixed in my mind the impression of a terrifying and awe-inspiring vortex." To the muffled throbbing of double-basses wisps of dark cloud float away, torches blaze in the twilight and illuminate, one after another, whirling couples, who follow each other or break into groups to the tune of many broken themes. From beginning to end the music never loses the fairylike atmosphere of the dream. But this recent creation gives us nothing of the dream.

This version is, in fact, an adaptation of the choreography produced earlier by Lander in Copenhagen. At the Opéra about 30 years ago Ida Rubinstein presented a production



SETTING IN MILAN: The design by André Levasseur for Ashton's version of La Valse *at La Scala, Milan. These tobacco-coloured draperies were first seen through a cloud gauze. The sky at the back is deep blue.* *Photo: Piccagliani*

with choreography by Fokine, but few remember it. But, again and again, *La Valse* has attracted the masters of contemporary ballet. Massine composed a tragedy of death. Balanchine betrayed his reputation as a "musician" in committing the heresy of combining it with *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales*. Harald Lander has adhered to the original idea most closely: unfortunately he has turned it into "a waltz" or rather an *Invitation to the Dance* (or rather a *carnet de bal*); a slight production in pleasant style but one which never measures up to the grandeur of the musical design.

A young girl hurries off to a ball. Excited and impatient, she sees the silhouettes of dancers passing by. Acting the coquette and the centre of attraction, she becomes Queen of the Ball, selecting or rejecting her distracted cavaliers until, finally, a handsome prince in braided uniform arrives to elect her his.

The plot has been produced with the minutest detail by the choreographer. Each smile and every gesture have been directed with his well-known skill. But the ballet does not ring true—given the dynamics of musical inspiration the choreographer constantly minimises them or fails to make use of them. In any case, even if the choreography had fulfilled Ravel's wishes, it would have been crushed by the enormous plaster structure of confectionery designed by Jean-Denis Maillart. As soon as the first curtain lifts we see a staircase and arcades, lit by dozens of torches, designed in the direct tradition of the gipsy operettas. A harsh lighting floods the ballroom, and the

ASHTON REHEARSES: Frederick Ashton rehearses the company from La Scala in his version of Ravel's La Valse. *Photo: Piccagliani*

MALE DESIGN: André Levasseur's design for the male costumes in Ashton's ballet at La Scala. *Photo: Piccagliani*

costumes, too, are overdone—we note in passing the fantastic wigs of naiads in greenish silk.

With his virile male presence, Alexander Kalioujny seemed to have strayed from some *Beau Danube*. Claire Motte radiated youth and charm: her poise and rare personality were some compensation for the criticisms I have already made. **Marie-Françoise Christout**

at La Scala, Milan

First given at the Teatro alla Scala by the resident ballet company on February 1, 1958. Music by Maurice Ravel. Choreography by Frederick Ashton. Designed by André Levasseur.

Cast

VERA COLOMBO ELETTRA MORINI
CARMEN PUTHOD MARIO PISTONI
GIULIO PERUGINI

WALTER VENDETTI
and *corps de ballet*

ASHTON'S realization of Ravel's *La Valse* was acclaimed by both critics and public alike after it was first given at La Scala. It formed the last part of an all-Ravel programme which had started with the one-act opera—*L'Heure Espagnole* (designed by Jean-Denis Malclès) and continued with *L'Enfant et les Sortilèges* for which Colette originally wrote the book. This was designed by François Ganeau and had choreography by Ugo Dell'-Ara, with Carla Fracci, Fiorella Cova and Roberto Fascilla in the principal dancing rôles.

Talking about *La Valse*, after his return to England, Ashton said: "I have always wanted to choreograph this ballet ever since I first danced in it with the Ida Rubenstein company. I loved the music but was never very happy with the way it was first presented. Nijinska made it a completely abstract work and Benois dressed us in lamé tunics. Boys and girls were dressed alike and we all wore close-fitting helmets, like bathing caps. Later it was changed to a scene at a ball.

"I think that it is natural that I should want to do this ballet, particularly as I have already done Ravel's *Valses Nobles et Sentimentales*, a work of mine for which I have a particular affection. I have never considered, nor would I ever do so, merging these two Ravel waltz choreographic poems into one ballet.

"At La Scala I have tried to keep as closely as possible to the idea which Ravel himself outlined so clearly. André Levasseur designed a front cloth of clouds which disappear to reveal chandeliers which light up the waltzing couples. I have tried to realize it as the apotheosis of the Viennese waltz which is what Ravel intended the work to be. In his designing, also, Levasseur has followed Ravel's original idea. The main ballroom scene was in tobacco colour with the blue sky showing through at the back. I was most impressed by the way La Scala realized these designs and they took enormous trouble to give some substance to the draperies which can so often look either too heavy and unattractive or too wispy and rather cheap.

"I was also very impressed with the great enthusiasm of the Italian dancers and I very much liked the way that they never marked at rehearsals but danced all-out all the time. Somehow it never seemed to enter their heads to do anything else. Another thing I admired very much about the Italian dancers, and this made it a particular pleasure to work with them, is that they are always on the beat. They all have a wonderful natural sense of music.

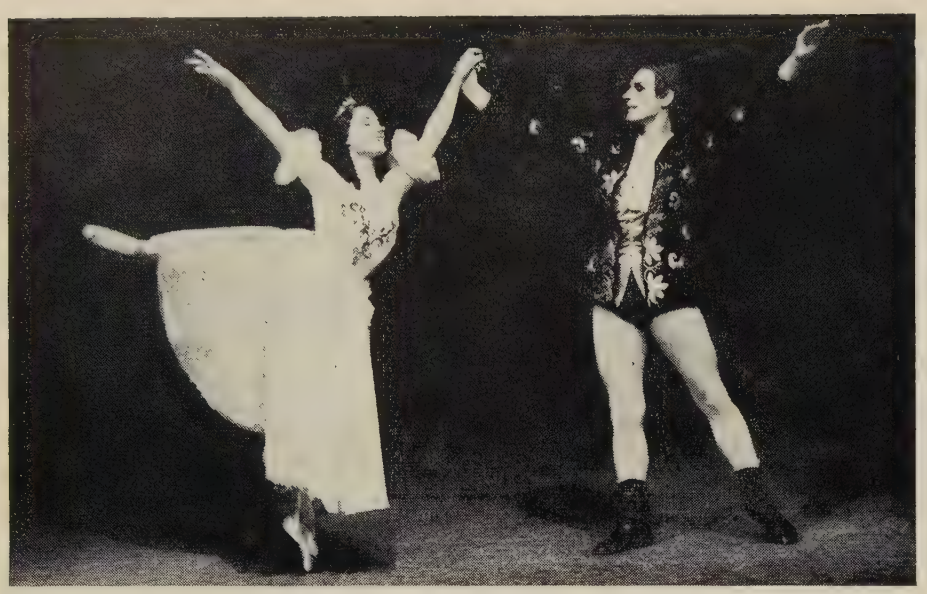
"Carla Fracci, who you have heard quite a lot about, was not in *La Valse* but I used her in the ballet in Gluck's *Orpheus*, which I created later. She was very good indeed in the flute solo in the Dance of the Blessed Spirits. You probably remember that Beriosova danced this part when I produced the opera at Covent Garden.

"Did I like working at La Scala? Yes, it was a very interesting experience and they were all very kind and helpful. There were a few troubles, there always are, but they were different troubles to the troubles one encounters here."

FEMALE WALTZERS (Top): André Levasseur's costumes for the corps de ballet. *They were in a a variety of shades of soft colours.*

PERFORMANCE (Middle): A picture of the actual performance showing the three principals in white costumes. It also gives some idea of how well Levasseur's designs were realized.

AFTERMATH (Bottom): Frederick Ashton, centre, surrounded by the company on stage after the first performance of his version of Ravel's La Valse *at La Scala, Milan. Photos: Piccagliani*



A FINNISH CINDERELLA: Doris Laine in the title rôle with Klaus Salin as the Prince in the pas de deux *from Act 2 of Zakharov's version of the Prokofiev ballet.* *Photo: Taisto Tuomi*

AT THE BALL: Above, Stepmother Seija Silfverberg between the two Stepsisters, Maj-Lis Rajala and Margareta v. Bahr, watched by Helmer Salmi as the Jester.
Below, Doris Laine supported by suitors in a scene from Act 2. *Photos: Taisto Tuomi*

Cinderella

at the State Opera, Helsinki

New Production at the State Opera, Helsinki, on December 14, 1957. Ballet in three acts. Music by Sergei Prokofiev. Libretto by H. D. Volkova. Choreography by Rostislav Zakharov. Designed by Paul Suominen. Conducted by Nisse Rinkama.

Cast

Cinderella	DORIS LAINE
Prince	KLAUS SALIN
Stepmother	SEIJA SILFVERBERG
Stepsisters	MARGARETA V. BAHR, MAJ-LIS RAJALA
Jester	HELMER SALMI
Fairy Godmother	SAGA ERIKSSON

ABOUT a year ago the Russian choreographer Rostislav Zakharov produced *The Fountains of Bakhchiserai* in Helsinki. It was a great success. Now again last December the audience at the State Opera were sitting with great expectations waiting for the curtain to rise on the première of *Cinderella* to Zakharov's choreography and production. It was splendid. I had not seen a ballet in Finland for two years and there I now sat full of admiration. I understand that Finland is the first country to produce the Russian version of *Cinderella.*

Zakharov's production is a fairy-tale, not a pantomime. He simply tells the story of Cinderella, who in the first act is a shy girl, dressed in rags, ill-treated by her stepmother and two stepsisters. Quietly she does her domestic duties; sometimes, when left alone, shows her curiosity and joy of life.

The first act is full of preparation for the ball. The clothes arrive and the Dancing Master teaches the Stepmother and the Stepsisters to dance. Here Zakharov shows his genius for caricature, for it is not the appearance and the dancing of the Stepmother and Stepsisters that tells us their ugliness. Their looks are pleasant but their characters are mean. The grotesque good-looking Stepmother is delightfully comic while trying to learn dancing. The Stepsisters are two nicely dressed, pretty girls. Zakharov has skilfully indicated in the choreography their quarrels, jealousy and wickedness. The story continues with the appearance of the Fairy Godmother in disguise. This is followed by the divertissement of the four seasons. Well-contrived choreography vividly describes each of the seasons.

The second act opens with the splendour of the ballroom, where dancing couples are at first reflected in the huge mirror which is formed by a gauze. This is removed and the dancing continues in the big ballroom where the Spanish, Chinese and Indian Princes are waiting. The Stepmother with her husband and daughters arrive, followed soon after by the Prince and his Jester. As dancing continues, there are many amusing and comic scenes with the Stepmother and the Stepsisters trying to dance gracefully with their different partners and the Jester playing many pranks.

Then at the back of the ballroom where doors lead to a beautiful garden Cinderella makes her entrance. The most memorable moment is the grand *pas de deux* for Cinderella and the Prince. Zakharov's ingenuity is excellent. This *adagio* theme is full of unusual and strange pictures to which more effect is given by airy acrobatic jumps and lifts. It is a difficult, but fascinating and beautiful waltz. Suddenly midnight strikes and Cinderella has to leave. The time is shown by the face of a clock formed by twelve dancers carrying the

— in Finland and Italy

twelve numbers. They are the same dancers of the previous Seasons divertissement. The spotlights follow Cinderella's white figure in her flight along the corridors and up and down the staircases. The Prince is seen searching for her, and after she has left he finds her slipper.

As in the Soviet version, in the third act the Prince goes round the world in the search for his Princess. In Zakharov's production he really does so. First he is seen in his library with his men. On the table is a big globe which he keeps on turning and finding places where they have not yet searched. So off he goes, his faithful Jester with him. Here is the divertissement which includes the Spanish Dance and the Snake Dance. At the end the Prince tries nearer his home. Once more an amusing scene of good mime and comic dancing when the Stepmother and the Step-sisters try on the slipper. Finally the moving scene when Cinderella is discovered by the Prince and all ends happily.

IT was a pleasure to see how good the Finnish dancers are. The whole company seems well trained and was dancing with precision and brio. Even the young dancers from the Opera Ballet School, who take part in different scenes, are very good.

On the first night the part of Cinderella was danced by Doris Laine. She was a real Cinderella, beautiful both in her rags and in her ball dress. All her movements were precise and graceful, the most difficult steps danced with ease and her *pirouettes* had a remarkable swiftness. Her dramatic portraying of the ill-treated Cinderella and the radiant Princess in love with the Prince was excellent and most convincing. She had a brilliant partner in Klaus Salin as the Prince. His dancing in the second act's difficult *Adagio* was polished and in his trip round the world he showed his skill in the many acrobatic jumps and humorous tricks.

Seija Silfverberg made the sort of Step-mother who was all that Zakharov wanted her to be; in addition to her fine dancing her mime was excellent. The Stepsisters, Margareta v. Bahr and Maj-Lis Rajala, both star dancers, made a delightful pair.

Helmer Salmi has every reason to be happy with his rôle of the Jester. He danced with freedom and a spirit of mischief. All through his virile dancing was buoyant and elastic.

Paul Suominen's décor was very charming, particularly in the big ballroom scene with its mirror, stairs, pillars and the garden at the back. Throughout his lighting and use of reflections were very effective and helped to create an appropriate fairy-tale atmosphere.

Marketta Ormala

at La Scala, Milan

Ballet in three acts with book by N. Volkov and music by S. Prokofiev. Version with choreography by Alfred Rodrigues and décor by André Beaurepaire. First presented at the Teatro alla Scala, Milan, during 1955-56 season, with Violette Verdy in the title-rôle. Revived in 1957-58 season, with the following cast:—

Cinderella	CARLA FRACCI
Her stepsisters	JOYCE GRAEME and BRENDA HAMLYN
Her father	GINO PESSINA
Her stepmother	DORA RICCI
The Prince	GIULIO PERUGINI
The fairy godmother	FIORELLA COVA
The Jester	MARIO PISTONI
The Fairy of the Spring	ELETTRA MORINI
The Fairy of the Summer	CARMEN PUTHOD
The Fairy of the Autumn	VERA COLOMBO
The Fairy of the Winter	GILDA MAIOCCHI

ALFREDO RODRIGUES, as the South African choreographer is known in Italy, has used a much fuller version of Prokofiev's score than that used by Ashton in his production for the Royal Ballet. It was a pleasure to hear this music played so brilliantly by the marvellous orchestra of La Scala that one almost had the impression of hearing it for the first time. Indeed, this was one of the principal pleasures of the evening, which perhaps explains why the conductor's name and photograph—Luciano Rosada—were given greater prominence in the programme than those of the choreographer or designer!

From the theatrical point of view, Ashton was evidently wise to use a shortened version of the score. Nothing much is gained by the inclusion of the stepmother as well as the jealous sisters, and the Prince's journey through foreign lands in search of Cinderella is frankly rather a bore. Perhaps at the Bolshoi Theatre this journey provides an excuse for some spectacular stagecraft and some exciting national dances. At La Scala, the Prince merely steps on to a boat and then stands on deck peering through a telescope. Unfortunately all he finds are some rather dull Spanish and Arabian dances which seem to have strayed out of an indifferent production of *The Nutcracker*.

Cinderella needs splendid scenery, exciting and original choreography or brilliant dancing if it is to be a real success. The treatment it gets at La Scala falls short of the mark in all these respects. Beaurepaire's décor is fussy and indeterminate. It has neither the Slavonic atmosphere which might have been appropriate for Prokofiev's music nor the smart glamour which one might have expected from a leading French designer.

Rodrigues is of course a highly competent professional choreographer but he has not created any moments of exceptional humour or beauty. The dancing throughout was of a good general standard, without ever being breathtaking. Many of the dancers evidently found it difficult to "project" their personalities in such a large theatre. Even the Ugly Sisters did not create as much merriment as they evidently intended; perhaps it is easier for male dancers to succeed in parts like these. Although Mario Pistoni's Jester was well danced, a permanent smile is not really a substitute for true gaiety. Perugini as the Prince gave the impression of a true *danseur noble* and danced his variation in a style which recalled Somes.

The outstanding performance came from Carla Fracci, the young Italian ballerina who danced in Dolin's *The Pas de Quatre* with Markova, Chauviré and Schanne at last year's Nervi Festival. Cinderella was her first leading rôle. Fracci has great charm and tenderness, and in the first act her wistful pathos frequently suggested a young Fonteyn. Her technique is not yet in the virtuoso class but then, technically, Cinderella is not one of the most demanding rôles. It would be good to see Fracci dance this ballet as a guest at Covent Garden and it might be a revelation to many people who are unaware of the good work now being done by the leading Italian ballet schools.

Oleg Kerensky

BRITISH DANCERS IN MILAN: Brenda Hamlyn and Joyce Graeme, two well-known soloists previously with Ballet Rambert, as the Ugly Sisters in Rodrigues's version of Prokofiev's Cinderella *at La Scala. Below, the preparation for the ball. Right, at the ball.* *Photo: Piccagliani*

PIERROT: Adolf Bolm, the famous Pierrot of the Diaghilev production. The rôle was first created in St. Petersburg by a dancer later to become world famous as a Soviet producer—Vsevolod Meyerhold. Photo: Hoppé

Ballet Perspectives: 5

Le Carnaval

by CLIVE BARNES

THE influence of the *commedia dell'arte* on the contemporary theatre is made none the less deep for being difficult to trace. That strange medley of entertainment which was devised by Italian strolling-players and makes its first recorded appearance in Bergamo at around the middle of the 16th century soon had offshoots all over the world. The characters changed, the early boisterous spirit became softened, and by the beginning of the 19th century the ragamuffin Arlechinno became the smooth, gay Harlequin of the diamond tights and black skull-cap we still recognize today, but the tradition continues. I do not know when Harlequin first arrived in Russia, yet by the 1830's Harlequinades were one of the most popular spectacles to be given in the *Balagani*, those wooden platform theatres that were an integral part of the Russian fairs and carnivals.

It was at one of these, at the age of four, that Alexandre Benois saw his first Harlequinade, and developed a love for dancing and mime (as well as for fairs and the Harlequinade) which has remained with him throughout his life. Another devotee of the Harlequinade was Ivan Vsevolojsky, the director of the Russian Imperial Theatres from 1881 to 1899. Already the Harlequinades were in decline and by the 1880's they had almost completely disappeared in Russia. Fokine, born in 1880, was just too young to have seen the Harlequinades in their heyday, yet this did not prevent the cosmopolitan and mercurial Harlequin from exerting his influence, albeit indirectly.

It was, I believe, Vsevolojsky who first conceived the idea of putting Harlequin on the ballet-stage. Commissioning Riccardo Drigo to write the music, the production of *Harlequinade* (or *Les Millions d'Arlequin*) was entrusted to Marius Petipa. In two acts it was first given at the small Hermitage Theatre on February 10, 1900, and three days later was transferred to the Maryinsky. It proved to be Petipa's last successful ballet. Writing in his Dance Index monograph *Marius Petipa* (translated by Anatole Chujoy) the great Russian critic Yuri Slonimsky has said: "The fresh and vital elements in Petipa's genius, long buried as a result of 'the cultural guidance' of Vsevolojsky and his own self-denial, burst into flower with an abundance of action dances and a lively spirit of humour and gaiety. Some of the details undoubtedly inspired Fokine in his *Carnaval*." Slonimsky does not mention that Fokine danced in *Harlequinade*—in which he partnered Anna Pavlova—and an old photograph of him as Harlequin in this ballet irresistibly recalls *Carnaval*, both in pose and costume, so much so indeed that more often than not it is found captioned as coming from the later ballet.

The next step along the road towards *Carnaval* was taken in the spring of 1908. Benois and Fokine collaborated in a miniature ballet, for four dancers and lasting fifteen minutes, given at the Annual Students' Ball of the Academy of Arts. Benois based the scenario on the Harlequinade, and designed the décor and costumes himself. The music, also chosen by Benois, was taken from Clementi's Sonatinas, orchestrated for the purpose by Maurice Keller. As none of the dancers of the Imperial Ballet was allowed to appear, the leading rôles were taken by Marie Mariusovna Petipa (Columbine), the old Hungarian dancer Bekeffy (Harlequin) and Enrico Cecchetti (Pantaloon), all of whom had retired from the stage. The fourth character was Pierrot. The stage is almost set, as it were, for *Carnaval*, yet there is still one vital element missing—romanticism. These *commedia dell'arte* figures are a long way removed from Chiarina, Eusebius, Florestan, Estrella and Papillon, who flirt and languish so triumphantly through Fokine's famous ballet.

Early in 1910 Fokine was approached by Kornfeldt, the editor of the humorous magazine *Satyricon*, and his friend the poet Patiomkin. The magazine was giving a ball, which they were calling *Carnaval*, at the Sala Pavlova in St. Petersburg, and wanted Fokine to arrange a ballet for it by way of a cabaret. The title of the ball immediately suggested Schumann's Piano Suite to Fokine's mind and he resolved to make use of it. In searching for a suitable theme for the ballet Fokine was greatly assisted by the two journalists who translated passages from a biography of Schumann (almost certainly F. G. Jansen's) and some of the composer's letters. From these, together with the titles of the twenty pieces that go to make up the suite, Fokine constructed his ballet. These titles, which indidentally Schumann added after composing the music, included the familiar Harlequin, Columbine, Pierrot and Pantalon, and also introduce the new romantic characters. These were all nicknames given to his friends by Schumann in his letters; thus, Chiarina represented Clara Wieck (later his wife), Estrella was Ernestine Von Fricken, while Florestan and Eusebius are names used by Schumann to symbolize two aspects of his own character, the ecstatic and the sensitive, the impetuous and the dreamy.

COLUMBINE: Tamara Karsavina in her Columbine costume photographed in front of a looking-glass in St. Petersburg. She created the rôle of Columbine on its first embryonic performance at the Satyricon ball in St. Petersburg and later on its first Western European performance in Berlin and later in Paris. She, more than any other ballerina proved to be the ideal for the varying facets of Fokine's creative genius.

Fokine suggested Léon Bakst as the designer for the ballet, who, despite the misgivings of the ball's sponsors regarding the expense, agreed to undertake the work for half of his customary fee. Bakst also appears to have collaborated on the ballet's scenario, and to him goes the credit for placing the work in the "Biedermeyer" period—the Vienna of the 1830's, the time when the music was composed. In his researches into the background of Schumann's score, Fokine must have been impressed by the similarity between his own struggles against artistic conservatism and those of the composer, represented in *Carnaval* by the *Marche des "Davidsbündler" contre les Philistins* with which the piano suite ends, and he consequently seized the opportunity offered by the score to introduce the defeat of the Philistines into his ballet.

It is said that Fokine had only three days of rehearsal for the ballet, and this, considering what we know of his methods of composition, may well be true. In any case this first version of *Carnaval* was more or less identical with that later produced by Diaghilev, the only substantial difference being that in the ballet's conclusion the dancers left the stage and mingled with the audience in the ballroom, only returning for the ballet's concluding pose.

There is also general agreement that the Bakst costumes were the same as used by the Diaghilev company, but on the setting for this first production some doubt exists. Mr. Beaumont in his *Complete Book of Ballets* states that the setting depicted "a little garden," but in *The Birth of the Ballets Russes* Prince Peter Lieven speaks of it as being produced "without any scenery at all," while Benois, in his *Reminiscences of the Russian Ballet*, refers to "the clever 'neutral background' of dark-blue draperies." It might well be that Mr. Beaumont's garden was used for a later production, for in a revealing footnote Benois adds: "Unfortunately Bakst completely altered his décor when *Carnaval* was transferred to the Maryinksy Theatre. Instead of the neutral background which allowed one to imagine anything one wished, he made a rather ordinary garden, with a bridge."

I can find no further reference to this Maryinsky production mentioned by Benois and the ballet never seems to have been in the official Maryinsky repertoire, but Serge Grigoriev in describing the preparations for Diaghilev's 1910 season, in his book *The Diaghilev Ballet* 1909-1929, says that Bakst suggested "a garden scene" as a new setting for *Carnaval*. This suggestion Diaghilev emphatically turned down, but Bakst may well have utilized the idea for a further production. There also remains the mysterious cast list that Mr. Beaumont quotes in his *Michel Fokine and his Ballets* consisting of: Lopokova (Columbine), Fokina (Chiarina), Piltz (Estrella), Nijinska (Papillon), Bulgakov (Pierrot), Fokine (Harlequin), Orlov (Pantalon), Scherer (Eusebius), and Vasiliev (Florestan). This cast Mr. Beaumont allocates to the Paris première on June 4, 1910, which is obviously incorrect (for one thing Lopokova did not join the company until the very end of the Paris season) and which Mr. Beaumont himself corrects in *The Complete Book*. However, this cast list must belong to some performance or other, and the indications are against it being a performance given by the Diaghilev company. Is it too speculative to suggest that this cast—and the garden setting—possibly belong to a Maryinsky charity production?

To return to the very first version of the ballet given at the Satyricon ball, the cast included Tamara Karsavina (Columbine), Leonide Leontiv (Harlequin), Vera Fokina (Chiarina), Vsevolod Meyerhold (Pierrot), Enrico Cecchetti (Pantalon), Ludmilla Schollar (Estrella), Bronislava Nijinska (Papillon), and Joseph Kchessinsky (Florestan).

CARNAVAL *IN THE 'THIRTIES: After Diaghilev's company disbanded on his death, one of the first full revivals was given by the Ballet Russe of Colonel de Basil. The above picture shows this revival by the de Basil company in Monte Carlo.* *Photo: Barba*

Like so many of the activities of the Diaghileve Ballet the events leading up to the inclusion of *Carnaval* in the repertory are disputable. Lifar claims (in *Diaghilev*) that the great impresario himself was "moved to enthusiasm" by the first version and "arranged to include it." Haskell (in his earlier book *Diaghileff*) states that far from enthusiastic Diaghilev had to be persuaded and at last "gave in to the persistence of Bakst and Benois." Grigoriev tells a similar tale that only differs in that the first suggestion comes from Grigoriev himself and he is warmly supported by Benois. As Grigoriev is in no way self-seeking and was, after all, an eye-witness, his account may presumably be accepted. Diaghilev insisted on new scenery by Bakst (a plain emerald green back-cloth, decorated with a broad gold dado with a tulip-like *motif*, and with two 1830 sofas) and the piano score was orchestrated by Glazounov, Rimsky-Korsakov, Liadov and Tcherepnin.

Carnaval presents no clearly defined story but takes as a theme the varying moods of love. A mixture of mockery and romanticism, it laughs at its lovers with an underlying seriousness. Florestan the ardent, Eusebius the poetic, Estrella the coquettish, Chiarina the secretive and Papillon the thoughtless, are carelessly mingled with the Harlquinade characters, Pierrot, Pantalon, Columbine and Harlequin. This quartet, in some measure, reflects the attitudes and expressions of the romantic lovers, so that Pierrot is Eusebius made ridiculous (or pathetic, or even tragic, if you like) and Pantalon is Florestan grown old in the service of his heart. Over the whole riot of lovers reign Harlequin and Columbine, the charmingly, heartlessly attractive. Fokine's light comedy digs deep. We can recognize in his ballet all the lovers we have ever known, and if we are honest we can see ourselves.

The choreography is startlingly apt. By setting his ballet in a kind of vestibule at a masked ball, Fokine can make his dancing arise directly from the theme. Dancers waltz in naturally, and even when the classical technique is used it bears a relevance to the character depicted. The slow *pas de trois*, danced by Chiarina and her friends to the piece Schumann called *Chopin*, suggests, with its gently gliding on the points, an adolescent ritual of girlish secrecy. Harlequin's brilliant *Paganini* variation utilizes deft spins and jumps to give a sketch of the character with the economical accuracy of a master draughtsman.

Where the classical technique is not appropriate Fokine discards it. Pierrot's movements drooping with self-pity and lethargic with sadness, are contrived to depict a character whom it would be almost impossible to realize in the terms of the classic dance. Yet, except for the rôle of Eusebius, nothing is left to mime in *Carnaval*. If it is a hand-book of love's anatomy, it is equally a text-book of the expressive possibilities of dancing.

The construction of *Carnaval* is as sound as a Pinero play, so that what could easily have been a parade of only loosely connected dance-studies, resembling what the Elizabethans would doubtlessly have called "humours," is made into a coherent unity. The dancers keep swimming back into view giving the work an aquarium-like continuity. Furthermore the characters are so firmly drawn that the spectator has an intriguing sense of watching events at a real party—the meaning of which he is only partly aware—through a gap in the curtain. These people have a life of their own; that rose so carelessly tossed to Eusebius by his mistress has a significance he cannot know, Pierrot walks in loaded with a whole bundle of past experience, and this is not the first time that Pantalon has been gulled by Columbine and Harlequin.

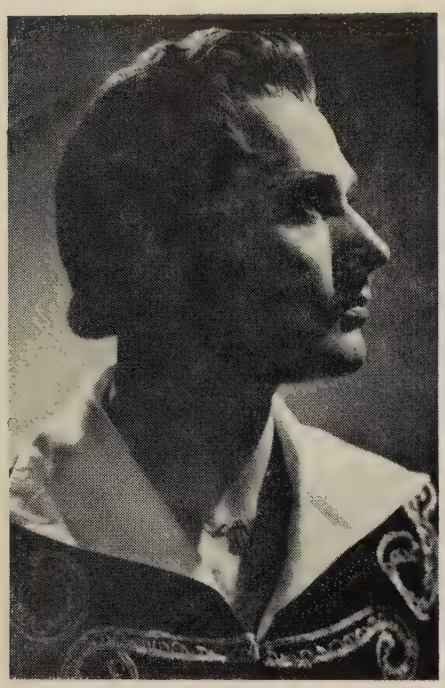
Bakst's ornately severe setting provides the perfect meeting ground for these young people, and his costumes inconsequentially mixing more or less traditional Harlequinade costumes with conventional dress of the 1830's, are extremely well blended. Some of these costumes probably show the influence of Aubrey Beardsley, an artist highly regarded by the Diaghilev circle.

The music and its orchestration are successful to the point of almost making us forget the original piano suite from which it is taken. The order of the piano suite, which is retained by the ballet, is *Preambule, Pierrot, Arlequin,*

continued on page 34

A Dancer with Expression

by JOHN PERCIVAL



MIRO ZOLAN *Photo: Houston Rogers*

WHEN Miro Zolan first came to this country in 1946 he had already enjoyed, for so young a man, remarkably wide experience and great success. With companies in Czechoslovakia, Austria and France he had danced the leading rôles in many of the standard ballets and had been also a ballet-master and choreographer. But in Prague, the city of his birth, he did not feel that there were the same opportunities for the free and vigorous development of the art of ballet as in England. For this reason he was happy to accept an invitation from Mona Inglesby to join International Ballet.

Since then he has become a British citizen, has made his home here (he is married to another dancer, Sandra Vane, and has a young son) and has made his career entirely in British ballet.

In 1948, Zolan joined Ballet Rambert for their long Australian tour. Afterwards he returned to International Ballet until an illness kept him from dancing for several months. To complete his recovery from this, he went back to the healthy Australian climate in 1951 and joined the Borovansky company. For them he mounted *The Sleeping Beauty* and *Giselle*, dancing both the Prince and the Bluebird in the former as well as Albrecht and several other rôles. Two years later, in England again, he was invited to join the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet, where he has remained ever since.

With all these companies Zolan has been a leading dancer, and he has consequently taken a fairly wide range of rôles. At one time or another, for instance, he has danced the leads in most of Fokine's best-known ballets: *Les Sylphides*, *Le Spectre de la Rose*, *Carnaval* (both Harlequin and Pierrot), *Petrushka* and *Schéhèrazade*.

His rôles have also always included the *premier danseur* parts in revivals of the nineteenth century classics. To these he is especially well suited, partly no doubt because his early professional training was received almost entirely from teachers who were themselves trained in the old Imperial Russian ballet school at St. Petersburg, including Preobrajenska, Egorova, Kniaseff and Vaganova.

Like other dancers who have come to British ballet with the background of a different school (Violetta Elvin, for instance, or Toni Lander), Zolan has revealed an interesting and valuable process of assimilation. While themselves gradually adopting the many good features of the English style of dancing, such dancers have retained other virtues which, although less obviously, communicate themselves in some degree to their colleagues and thus serve to widen and strengthen our young tradition.

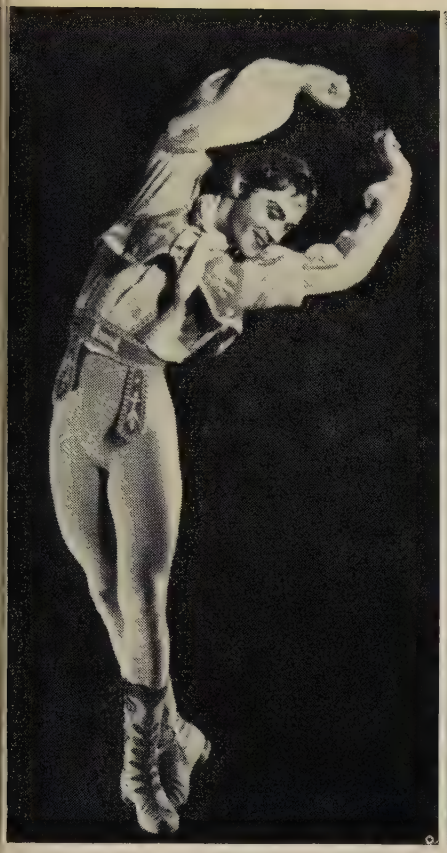
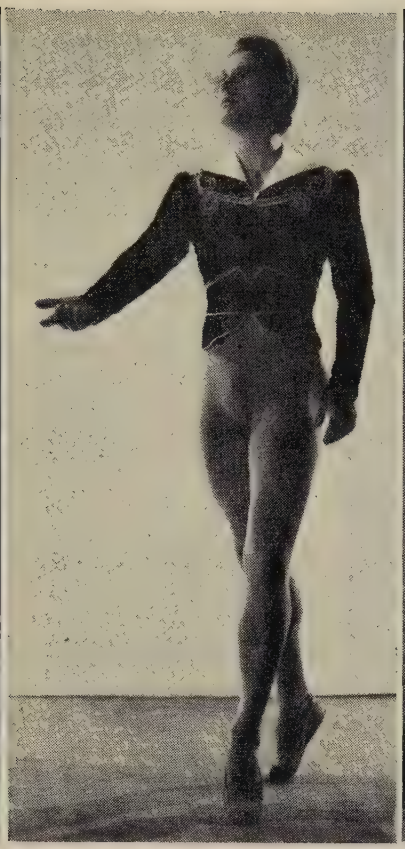
I remember the richly romantic feeling with which Zolan invested the parts of the Prince in *The Sleeping Beauty* and Albrecht in *Giselle* when I first saw him dance them some nine years ago. At that time it was rare in British ballet to find a dancer who could, like Zolan, look romantic and manly at once. Today such a combination is far more normal. In the meantime, Zolan has somewhat modified his approach to such rôles. His Siegfried in *Swan Lake* today retains the commanding presence he showed then in *The Sleeping Beauty*, but dramatically his performance is quieter and more reserved—more "English," in fact.

A similar change is seen in his Albrecht, which has mellowed from a touching but immature portrayal to one of the most distinguished and satisfying performances of this rôle to be seen today. This is only partly because of his very fine dancing, which is equally good and apt in the second act and in the peasant disguise of act one. Some of the credit must go also to his strong, sure partnering and clear, intelligent acting, but most to the fact that all these elements are homogeneously blended into an honest, direct presentation of the character, free of all affectation.

This honesty and directness are at the root of all Zolan's achievements as a dancer. They show to very good advantage in his playing of Frantz in *Coppélia*, which is, after Albrecht, his best rôle in the current repertory. With his powerful physique, Zolan's dancing is notable chiefly for its strong thrust and forcefulness, qualities particularly appropriate to this part. Zolan manages to look handsome in spite of the curious costume which Frantz is obliged to wear in the first two acts of this production, and he attacks the part with great zest. The junior branch of the Royal Ballet is able at present to show no less than four different interpretations of Frantz, all of them good. If Zolan's seems to me the most enjoyable for the vigour and strength of his dancing, the simple dignity of his partnering and the humour of his acting, I know that this is only a personal reaction. What is without doubt, however, is that Zolan is unique in British ballet in alternating the rôles of Frantz and Dr. Coppelius.

There have been other dancers who have turned to the rôle of the old toymaker when

EARLY YEARS: Left, at the age of 17 *when he was in Czechoslovakia.* *Photo: Skachel-Brnno*
Right, during 1951-52 *in* Petrushka *with the Borovansky Ballet in Australia.*

THREE FACETS OF ZOLAN: Left, as Frantz in Coppélia *with the Royal Ballet (photo: Denis de Marney). Middle, as Albrecht in the second act of* Giselle *(photo: Houston Rogers). Right, as the Rake in the brothel scene from Ninette de Valois's* The Rake's Progress *with Sandra Vane, his wife in real life. (Photo: Denis de Marney)*

they had to give up the part of the young lover, but it is at least unusual for a dancer to play both parts at the same stage of his career, and even more so to play them both so well. Zolan's Dr. Coppelius is in the comic tradition, a fantastically elaborated caricature of a crazy old man, but he does not allow this conception to interfere with the clear development of the action, which he mimes with an uncommonly lucid command of detail. In particular he marks with great precision the stages of the supposed bringing to life of the doll, indicating exactly what he has already done as well as just what he intends to try next.

The same clarity of expression may be seen in Zolan's playing of more modern rôles. It arises, I think, not only from an application to detail but also from the mature intelligence and seriousness of purpose which he brings to his work. He has danced many of the standard modern English ballets, including *The Rake's Progress*, and several works by Ashton.

One of his earliest rôles with the Royal Ballet was in the *pas de trois* in *Les Rendezvous*, where his *ballon* was well displayed. Later he took the solo rôle in this ballet and again used his powerful jump to good effect. Here, however, although well suited to the romantic adagio, he seemed to lack something of the light-heartedness demanded by other parts of the ballet. His Dago in *Façade* is amusing mostly for the mock-seriousness with which he plays the gigolo, but his best Ashton rôle is the white skater in *Les Patineurs*, deftly and smoothly partnering with just the right touch of restrained ardour.

As the Rake in de Valois's masterpiece, Zolan gives a performance which is as intelligently contrived as it is dramatically convincing. Many dancers in this rôle are good either as the young buck in the opening scene or as the degenerate creature at the end, but find the other aspect of the rôle beyond them. Zolan accomplishes both, and carefully distinguishes each step in the character's decline. The only reason, I think, why his is not one of the three or four outstanding performances of this rôle is that he does not quite succeed in making the whole ballet "jell" so effectively as the individual scenes. As it is, his performance is very much more than competent, being most impressive in the orgy, where his virile personality asserts itself forcefully, and in the mad scene. In this his physical strength and the controlled power behind his movements combine to produce a sense of the brute nature of the madman.

Unfortunately Zolan has been seen in few of the Royal Ballet's new creations during his period with the company. One partial explanation of this is undoubtedly that the choreographers during this period have been mainly very young men who would naturally expect to find the youngest dancers of the company most receptive to their new ideas. This is a pity, for Zolan is a dancer who, as I know from conversations with him, is very much aware of the need for new developments in ballet. When he has appeared in the new works (in *Saudades*, for instance, or as the bride's father in *Blood Wedding*) he has brought his own natural authority to them.

He has also created the choreography for one work, *Pas de Joie*, which was given on one of the Sadler's Wells Choreographic Group's programmes four years ago. This was an unpretentious piece about a lovers' meeting which he danced himself with Annette Page. Zolan brought out well the promising line and authority of Page and provided himself with the opportunity for some remarkable partnering and a strong solo. In this he judiciously mingled his big, powerful movements, leaps and *tours en l'air*, with smaller, more intricate steps which made the others look even more impressive by contrast. Although no masterpiece, the ballet served to show the technique and presence of its performers to good advantage, which is no small merit.

I understand that it is possible that the present season may be Zolan's last with the Royal Ballet. It seems to me that one of the gravest weaknesses of our national ballet during recent years has been its failure to retain and make proper use of dancers once they reach their maturity. We all know that economic conditions prevent our companies from employing enough dancers to have older men and women to play appropriate rôles, although both the Russians and the Danes have shown the overwhelming value of such dancers.

Even more serious than this, however, is the loss of dancers in the prime of their life. Hart, Field and Turner are only three of the men whose regular active appearances on the stage stopped at a time when they still had much to give. The qualities of youth are no less stirring and touching in ballet than in everyday life, but however brilliant a dancer in his twenties may be, he will inevitably lack something of the enhanced authority and balance which a more mature artist displays.

It is a startling thought that, except for Michael Somes, Zolan is the only fully mature *danseur noble* in British ballet today. Paradoxically, this maturity is just as much an advantage when he takes the rôle of a very young man like Frantz as it is when he is playing an older man, such as Dr. Coppelius. In either case it adds both to the fullness and to the impact of his performance. To every appearance he brings a thoroughly professional attitude, and he approaches every rôle with intelligence. We could do with many more dancers like him.

curtain up!

ROYAL BALLET STARS WED: Rowena Jackson and Philip Chatfield, both stars of the Royal Ballet, leaving the church after their London wedding on February 4. Rowena Jackson looked beautiful in a full-skirted ballerina-length white lace dress. In the background can be seen Beryl Grey, the matron of honour, who wore a dress and large picture hat of pink chiffon. Owing to the fact that a few days later the bride and groom were appearing on television and also because of their commitments with the Royal Ballet, they were unable to spend their honeymoon in Venice as had been previously announced. It is to be hoped that this will take place later.

Close-down at the Opéra

SINCE last October the performances at the Paris Opéra have been spasmodic and chaotic owing to the strikes of stagehands. Recently owing to further strikes of dancers the entire Paris Opéra ballet, apart from a few stars, have been dismissed and the theatre closed down. This national calamity is made even more serious owing to the fact that the company was scheduled to go to Moscow in the spring. At the time of writing I hear that some of the stars will give concert performances in front of black curtains, which was the same method adopted by members of the Royal Swedish Ballet in Stockholm when faced by the same situation.

But how efficiently these strikes have been organized! They are not announced until the audience is just about to enter the theatre; then begins a typical Paris scrum around the two high desks from which the money is refunded. As most of the Americans, who form a large proportion of any Opéra audience, have bought their tickets at a premium from ticket agencies and the Opéra will naturally hand over only the face value of the ticket, a good many altercations in very halting French ensue. Possibly there is something to be said for the methods of the Covent Garden box office after all.

Royal Exchange

THE promised interchange of dancers between the two Royal Ballet companies began, rather one-sidedly, in the week that the main company opened its present season at Covent Garden. Nadia Nerina and David Blair, not needed for *Sylvia* on the opening night, travelled to Cambridge to give three performances with the smaller company. They danced the *pas de deux* from the last act of *The Nutcracker*.

This is a good beginning but in time I hope for something more than guest stars dancing classical divertissements. There are plenty of the main company's principals who know much of the former Theatre Ballet's own repertory. And now that this integration of the two companies is starting, it would be pleasant also to see some of the dancers from the young company appearing at Covent Garden. Judging by their success during the recent Christmas season, it would seem that the touring company can show the resident company a thing or two; it would certainly give a certain stimulus to the dancers of both companies.

His only ballet

THAT most distinguished and important painter, Georges Rouault, recently died in Paris at the age of 83. His prodigious output only included one ballet for the Diaghilev company in 1929. But this work—the Balanchine-Prokofiev *The Prodigal Son*—earned him a lasting place in the admiration of all who have ever seen it and also in the annals of important ballet design.

The sombrely rich colours, glowing like the stained glass which the artist worked on as an apprentice, added their share to one of the most noble ballets on a Biblical theme created in this century.

Some years ago the Covent Garden scene painters most beautifully re-created these settings for the New York City Ballet during one of its London seasons. Neither the designs nor Balanchine's ballet had lost any of their majesty in the intervening years. It would be a most fitting memorial to a great painter if Balanchine could be persuaded to mount this work for the Royal Ballet—it would also add a most distinguished ballet to the British repertory.

Ballet on the Sabbath

MOST people welcomed the Sunday performances given by the Cossack dancers at the Albert Hall. Now I hear of another Sunday which will be enlivened by dancing. The Sunday Ballet Club will give its first performance at Wyndham's Theatre on March 23. This club, organized by James Ranger and Francis Sitwell (the son of Sacheverell Sitwell), has an imposing advisory committee, which includes the artistic directors of every impor-

FOUR AWARD WINNERS: José Limón, Lucia Chase, Alicia Markova and Jerome Robbins at the cocktail party at the Plaza Hotel, New York on January 27. This was given by American Dance Magazine *in honour of the four artists who had received the second annual award for their varying services to the dance in the past year.* *Photo: Impact*

ant British company. It plans to give three or four of these Sabbatical performances each year. A month before its first performance it already had 350 members and it is to be hoped that these will be greatly increased in the near future as they, together with the money taken at the box office at each performance, will keep this potentially vitally important club going.

For the first performance, the Royal Ballet will contribute two works—*First Impressions* with choreography and designs by Alan Beale, a member of the younger company, to the music of Kenneth Leighton; Anne Heaton has choreographed a *Grand Pas de Deux*, to Glazunov music, which she will dance with Donald MacLeary. Western Theatre Ballet will mount a new work by Wolfgang Brunner, the husband of Belinda Wright, to music by Thomas Rajna. The American designer Dan Snyder, who previously designed Brunner's *Les Deux Errants* for London's Festival Ballet, is responsible for the décor. For the final work of this first programme, Sunday Ballet Club offers a complete contrast—*Carnival in Trinidad*, a work by the West Indian dancer and choreographer, Boscoe Holder. This is to be performed by the Caribbean dancers of his own group.

Britons in Italy

IT is most gratifying the way in which Italy is continually turning to Britain for choreographers. First of all, Alfred Rodrigues established himself as a regular choreographer at La Scala, Milan, then along came John Cranko with his production of *The Prince of the Pagodas*. Frederick Ashton's recent contribution is pictured and reported elsewhere in this issue. Now I hear that Kenneth MacMillan will choreograph Stravinsky's recent ballet score, *Agon*, for La Scala. This is a most important assignment and it fully justifies the hopes that England had of his becoming a most sought-after international choreographer. He will take Nicholas Georgiadis, who has been associated with most of MacMillan's successes, with him to design the scenery and costumes.

It is not only British choreographers who will feature in Italy this year. I understand that London's Festival Ballet will be appearing at the Festival of Nervi in Genoa during the early part of July and immediately prior to their Festival Hall season. In another programme in the Nervi Festival, dancers of the Royal Ballet, headed by Svetlana Beriosova and David Blair, will appear.

Ballet for Scotland?

WITH news of the Western Theatre Ballet's brave attempt to establish a centre for ballet in the West of England, comes news of a further attempt at establishing a permanent ballet company outside London—this time in Scotland. I welcome the efforts of Margaret Morris, director of the Celtic Ballet, to raise £10,000 in order to found a National Scottish Ballet. As Scotland has the richest tradition of national dancing in any part of the British Isles, it would seem that they start off at a great advantage. I would have thought that the Edinburgh Festival might find some way of helping and encouraging such a venture, particularly as the most popular feature of each festival is a purely native entertainment—the Searchlight Tattoo.

I am a little surprised, however, to learn that the Celtic Ballet College has just opened a theatre, proudly claiming to be the smallest in Britain, which holds only thirty seats. Surely they expect to win a bigger audience than this?

Oh! those poor feet!

ELAINE FIFIELD, ex-Royal Ballet ballerina and now ballerina of the Borovansky Ballet in Australia, has hurt her foot. I gather that the injury is not too serious and that she hopes to be dancing again soon. Nearer home, three of the very young girls who featured in Fifield's original British company, the ex-Theatre Ballet, have also been on the sick list. They are Lynn Seymour, Clover Roope and Audrey Farriss. I found Lynn Seymour, with a sprained ankle, watching a performance by her company. "I accidentally stepped on Donald Britton's foot during a rehearsal of *The Angels*," she told me, "—and he won."

Another dancer who has been having knee trouble is the young Royal Danish star, and ex-Festival Ballet principal dancer, Flemming Flindt. His trouble started while he was still in England. It is taking a long time to recover, and often he has to go on with the aid of injections. However, he tells me that he hopes to be fully recovered so that he can appear as a guest artist during London's Festival Ballet season in Paris during April.

Cupid on the rampage

BALLET is soon going to become the most married profession in the world. Recently Tony Gilpin, stage manager of Festival Ballet and twin brother of the company's male star, announced his engagement to a soloist in his company—pretty Diane Westerman. They hope to get married in the summer. Rather belatedly, I am afraid, we also announce the marriage of two members of the smaller Royal Ballet—Roy Carlton and Pauline Barnes—who were married last year. More topical, however, is the engagement just announced of Catherine Boulton, of the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden, to Anthony Brooks Firestone.

He's telling us

READING art-critic John Russell's remarkable biography of the conductor, Erich Kleiber, I was interested to read that the great conductor's opinion, apparently something of a byword with him, was that: "Ballet was one of the most taxing of all forms of conducting."

Words like this from a man who, until his death in 1956, was one of this century's greatest conductors, should give heart to all the musical pygmies currently directing most of the world's ballet. They can now feel a whole lot better about their own shortcomings.

happy birthday to...

		April
Ronald Hynd	Royal Ballet	22
Elaine King	American Ballet Theatre	22
Milena Vukotic	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	23
Claudie Algeranova		24
Kenneth Melville	Borovansky Ballet	24
Angela Leigh	Canadian National Ballet	24
Sandra Sommers	American Ballet Theatre	24
Geronimo Navarro	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	24
Beth Fisher	American Ballet Theatre	28
John Sale	The Royal Ballet	28
Angela Harbour	Ballet Rambert	28
Anne Howard	The Royal Ballet	29
Yvonne Meyer	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	29
		May
Brenda Taylor	The Royal Ballet	3
Larry Boyette	American Ballet Theatre	3
Robert Barnett	New York City Ballet	6
Jacqueline Moreau	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	7
Kay Bird	Royal Winnipeg Ballet	9
Wendy Barry	London's Festival Ballet	10
Donald Spottswood	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	14
Ruth Ann Koesun	American Ballet Theatre	15
Nicholas Beriosoff	Ballet-master in Stuttgart	16
Nancie Demmler	American Ballet Theatre	16
Monique Cheseaud	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	17
Margot Fonteyn	The Royal Ballet	18
Daniel Seillier	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	18
Peter White	London's Festival Ballet	19
Gilbert Vernon	Producing in England and abroad.	21
Deryk Mendel	Choreographer in Paris	23
Graham Usher	The Royal Ballet	23
Tatiana Riabouchinska		23
Travis Kemp	Teaching in Turkey	23
Christian Foye	Opéra, Nice	23
Carola Beller	De Cuevas Grand Ballet	24
Ann Horn	Ballet Rambert	24

Dancer You Will Know

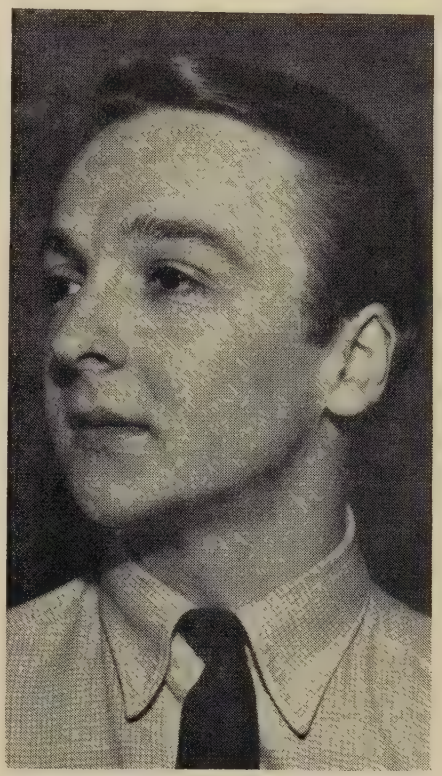


Photo: Keith Milland

GRAHAM USHER

Born in Beverley, Yorkshire. Studied as a child with local teacher, Miss Peggy Manley, from 1947 *until* 1949. *He entered the Royal Ballet School in April* 1949 *and remained there until June* 1955, *when he joined the company. He was appointed a junior male soloist at the beginning of* 1958.

Rôles: Blue Bird and Woodlands Cavalier in The Sleeping Beauty; *Scottish Dance in* Façade; *Earth* pas de six *in* Homage to the Queen; "*Shaw's part*" *in* Birthday Offering; *Fishes* pas de deux *in* The Prince of the Pagodas.

IT was undoubtedly Graham Usher's jump that first marked him out as a dancer we were one day going to know. Very soon after he first joined the company his swift, free leaps made him instantly recognizable, in *Sylvia*, in *The Miraculous Mandarin* and *The Shadow*.

Although he had done so little, what he had done had been done so well that it did not come altogether as a surprise when, for his first solo rôle, he was selected to dance Blue Bird. In the event, this first performance last season proved both disappointing and encouraging. Disappointing because one naturally expects an impossible amount from a boy highly regarded enough to leap-frog the hierarchy and jump in one bound from *corps de ballet* to the greatest male virtuoso rôle in ballet.

To have lived up to the foolish hopes his sudden glory engendered, he would have had to have been impossibly brilliant. This he was not, yet soberly considering his development so far he appears to be a classical dancer of great natural talent. If he can match this talent with stage personality he could easily develop into a dancer of the Shaw class.

So You Want to Dance?

Schools and Teachers
by E. C. MASON

WHAT TEACHING MEANS TO ME

An article based on a long series of discussions with ANGELA ELLIS, conversations with some of her past pupils, and some attendances as a spectator at her classes.

IT is common knowledge even to those who know only a little about the history of ballet how rare it has been for the brilliant dancer to become the first-rate teacher. Angela Ellis, now senior teacher at the famous Rambert School, began her career with the Ballet Rambert, but she admits frankly and without false modesty that she was never a good dancer. She was on the tall side, more suited to *demi-caractère* than the purely classical, and, as her mother, Marie Rambert, while teaching her, once put it in exasperated terms: "You have my love of dancing, but it is in your father's stiff body"—an observation which carried with it some sting of truth.

Her background also embraces Cecchetti training, classes with Vassilief, Cléo Nordi, Volkova and Gzovsky, and while she has learnt something from each of her teachers, it is to Vera Volkova that she feels most in debt. For long before Volkova became one of the most fashionable teachers we have ever had in London, Angela Ellis was attending her classes regularly.

With Volkova, she told me, you felt that you were really getting somewhere. She had the uncanny gift of being able to give the one single correction which would put you right—whether it be "turn the head faster," "keep the shoulder down" or "close the arms" and so on—rather than insist that you experiment yourself or try to perform half a dozen corrective movements simultaneously.

Volkova's fastidiousness

And Volkova was terribly particular and precise. She liked everything to be very neat and she was never satisfied unless everything was absolutely correct. Furthermore, Volkova herself was trained by Vaganova—acknowledged in every quarter as one of the great teachers of this century—and it was through Volkova that she learnt much of Vaganova's approach to the teaching of classical ballet. While we have a number of representatives teaching along the lines of the traditions and systems of Cecchetti, Pavlova, Nicholas Legat and Preobrajenska, the important point to make is that, to my knowledge, Angela Ellis is the only Vaganova-inspired teacher of professional dancers in this country at the present time.

While it can be said that many gifted dancers pick up even the most difficult steps easily—too easily in fact, for they seem to perform them instinctively—Angela Ellis insists that because she considers herself to have been anything but a "natural" dancer, everything she has learnt, she has learnt the "hard way." But being in this position (a fortunate one for a teacher!) and once having learnt to perform every movement basically and correctly, it is then possible to impart their correct execution to anyone else. Moreover, she adds, if you are shown something correctly, you can almost always do it correctly.

Her classes are fundamentally "solid" classes for dancers, and, consequently, dancers who really don't want to learn or who do not like a hard class, do not care for her teaching. Working on the principle that a slightly different *barre* every day forces the student to think, she does not use a "set *barre*." Furthermore, her *barre* is composed of the orthodox steps which make up the vocabulary of classical dance. On the principle that if one is correct at the *barre*, correctness in the centre is likely to be achieved, there are no non-classical movements (movements which never appear in classical ballet) given in her *barre*. She does, however, always give "stretches" and "bends" for limbering rather than loosening, but even these are used classically.

She is a stern upholder of the importance of technique. Technique, she believes, must be so good that the dancer is able to express himself or herself through that technique, and she can single out many very expressive dancers whom she considers would be even greater artists if they possessed stronger techniques. And, she emphasizes, there are no short cuts in the process of acquiring a technique.

With this in mind, she strongly discourages students who wish to attend advanced classes before they are ready for them. She is always in favour of students practising intelligently by themselves. With what she terms the presence of a "Welfare State mentality" it seems that only the most ambitious students are really prepared to work outside their set classes: the remainder hopefully expecting the teacher to turn them into dancers.

The construction of a class

It is vital to know how to construct a class, and on this subject she again learnt much from Volkova. To make certain that every class includes an *adage*, a balance, turns, jumps and *batterie* may seem obvious to many, but, again, how often are the rudiments ignored? A class must be planned not only for one day, but also so that it will fit into a pattern of classes for a week and a whole term—gradual progress and more difficult work balanced with constant revision of work already done.

If a step, say *grands ronds de jambe*, is not given at the *barre*, then some way has to be found of incorporating it into the centre practice. Again basic combinations of simple steps used in the *barre* can prepare the way for *enchaînements* similarly phrased and used in the centre later. Here is an example of steps used at the *barre* followed by parallel use in the centre:

Barre—3 *battements dégagés* (*en croix*) with a *plié* on the accent out, followed by 2 quick *battements dégagés* to the second position without *plié*. (4 beats.)

Centre—3 *assemblés* (*en croix*) followed by one *entrechat quatre*.

Note that in the centre the *enchaînement* will be performed with *épaulement*—the first *assemblé en croisé en avant*, the second *en face*, and the third in *arabesque croisé*.

Continuing with the subject of constructing a class—a balance in *attitude* may prepare the way for turns in *attitude*, while *promenades* in *arabesque* and second position may act as preludes to turns in both of these positions. Obvious as these short examples may seem to some, they can easily be overlooked, and they do illustrate in a small way how a balanced class is planned.

But teaching is something which can never be learnt from books and, moreover, there are many perils for the teacher who refers to notebooks. Most of the great teachers invented their *enchaînements* for a particular occasion or a special purpose, and many of their pupils who have since become teachers have diligently recorded their classes. But, says Angela Ellis, no matter how lovely certain movements that have been written down may appear, it is futile to give someone else's classes second-hand unless it is remembered precisely why they were originally given.

Righting a wrong

One of the problems which every teacher of professional dancers still has to face (admittedly a problem which is diminishing) is the appalling training still given in some provincial and overseas schools. Firstly, she says, the teacher must convince badly trained students that she is right, and then persuade them to unlearn much of what they have already learnt, and this process of undoing the original

ANGELA ELLIS: One of the two daughters of Marie Rambert and Ashley Dukes, Angela Ellis was previously a dancer in Ballet Rambert. She and her husband, David Ellis, formed and ran Ballet Workshop for some years. Now she is one of the senior teachers at the Ballet Rambert School and has already achieved considerable fame as a teacher.

Photo: John Chesworth

aining before they can begin to race ahead ay take a year.

Due, I think, in some measure to the fact hat she is in no way compelled to teach, is er capacity for effective and disinterested dgment—qualities rare among present-day achers, many of whom dare not be too candid hen forecasting the prospects of paying upils.

Once a dancer reaches 30, Angela Ellis says, e is really past great technical improvement, ut the good thing about teaching is that the lder you get, the better you get. "It is," she ontinues, "what I feel I should be doing, and is a very rewarding and stimulating profes- ion, bringing with it for me as much satis- action as standing in front of the curtain at ovent Garden holding a dozen bouquets."

Happiness and understanding

One cannot teach well unless one is happy, nd it is because she really enjoys teaching hat she is often able to strike an extraordinary hord of sympathy with her pupils. Margaret Hill, who has worked with her a great deal in he past, defined this to me as "a natural understanding of the dancers themselves." Other dancers who have at one time attended er classes at the Rambert School are Violette Verdy, Belinda Wright, Paula Hinton, Sally Gilmour, Nadia Nerina, Esteban Cerda and Tutte Lemkow.

For Angela Ellis there would be no satis- faction in teaching dancers if she could never ee the results, and today she gets immense njoyment when watching her past pupils lancing with the Ballet Rambert and other principal companies, and some amusement when she looks back to what they were like when they first attended her classes. And it is because of this interdependent link between school and company that she enjoys her present position.

She has never had a great public reputation, although the lack of it is not synonymous with nonentity. In fact, where dancers are concerned she has a distinct and very enviable reputation which she has perhaps been too busy or too unassuming to expand. I think she is best known outside the dancing profession as being the co-founder of Ballet Workshop, which she and her husband managed for five years. She rarely takes a holiday. During vacations she spends her mornings at the Mercury giving classes to professional dancers, and during summer months overseas students and teachers (many of whom come from America) attend her classes.

Today she is young enough to be able to perform any series of steps at tempo (a useful gift which proves to pupils that any *enchaînement* with difficult phrasing can be danced), but old enough to have had eleven years of teaching experience behind her. Part of her apprenticeship, incidentally, was served in South America where in Colombia in 1949 she and her husband, David Ellis, stayed for a year, giving classes and mounting performances.

Pupils who are advised to study with her are at once conscious of an enormous amount of correction. And students whom I have spoken to after classes seem to like them best because of their "dance quality," a quality often neglected in this country. I remember a Royal Ballet dancer, who had done one of her classes by chance, say afterwards: "She's one of the best teachers in London. If she was in West Street I'd try to go every day."

With the stage in mind

Her method of tuition is neither stale, carefully academic nor remote from the stage itself. Her *enchaînements* contain a generous amount of *épaulement* and presentation and there is nothing static about her classes, which are so designed as to make dancers think quickly and so pick up complex *enchaînements*. Ronald Hynd, another of her successful ex-pupils, admires the attention she gives to broad open *ports de bras*, and this, he told me, allied to her valid ideas on the subject of balance and *pirouettes*, makes her a wonderful teacher for boys, who eagerly respond to her warm vital personality.

Students will say: "Look at her turning," or "Look, she's up, look how long she can balance!" But, she emphasizes, steps which were once difficult for her to learn have never been forgotten. They are permanently fixed in both mind and body and, therefore, can be passed on to anyone.

It would be wrong to suggest that she never loses her patience or that her lively good humour never breaks, but these occasions are brief and rare. She has now been teaching since 1947 and throughout the vicissitudes of her career, her teaching has been maturing and acquiring its present distinctive character. Now she is recognized as one of the most successful teachers of professional dancers in this country.

Progress Report—*The Benesh System*

Over the past three years, DANCE AND DANCERS has said a good deal about the system of movement notation invented by Joan and Rudolf Benesh. Today this system is achieving universal fame and will achieve even greater fame owing to its inclusion in the British exhibits at the forthcoming Brussels exhibition

by FERNAU HALL

IN 1955, when the Benesh Dance Notation was launched, DANCE AND DANCERS took the lead in publishing articles giving details of the new system and some idea of its significance and potentialities. Development since then has been very rapid, and results already justify everything that was written at the time.

Within the Royal Ballet, progress has been particularly rapid; the experimental period is now definitely over. Pupils trained in Benesh Notation in the Royal Ballet School have been graduating into the company, making it possible for notation to be used in the normal work of production. The revival of *Veneziana* last December, with the help of dance-scores sent to the junior company on tour, was a landmark in the history of the Royal Ballet. No less significant was the decision to include notation in the syllabus right through the Lower School as well as the Upper School. Joan Benesh, teaching both ballet and notation in the Lower School, found that best results were achieved when she combined the two—writing on blackboards the *enchaînements* she wanted the dancers to perform. This has speeded up progress in both ballet and notation. What is more, the young dancers make notation part of themselves, and are well prepared to tackle the intricacies of *pas de deux* work and scoring for groups when they reach the Upper School.

Parallel with music

The art of music developed rapidly in new ways after music notation had been perfected, and it looks as if the same will happen in ballet. Senior students of notation from a number of schools are meeting at the Royal Ballet Upper School for an evening class in advanced scoring and composition, and trying out new choreographic ideas made possible by notation. They are giving new meaning to the word "choreography," which in fact means literally "dance-writing."

As the works in the international repertoire are written down, the basis is laid for the new science of "choreology." This includes the choreographic equivalent of the subjects taught to young musicians (counterpoint, harmony, structure, etc.)—something badly needed by young choreographers. Joan Benesh had a fascinating experience when she analyzed the score she prepared of *Petrushka*, as produced by Grigoriev and Tchernicheva for the Royal Ballet: she discovered the inner secrets of Fokine's magical choreography, and in particular his subtle use of "polychory"—dance counterpoint. (Since the Beneshes are moving into quite new fields, they have to coin new words to describe their discoveries.)

The R.A.D. and Rambert

Since September 1956 the Royal Academy of Dancing has made training in Benesh Notation a normal part of teachers' training. It has proved convenient to combine examinations in composition and notation, thus making the work of judging the compositions more speedy and accurate.

Benesh Notation is now a "must" for the dancer determined to make a professional career in British ballet. Realizing this, pupils of the Rambert School made arrangements with the North London Literary Institute (with the permission of Madame Rambert) for evening classes in Benesh Notation to be held at the Rambert School. These classes (which are open to the public) have proved so popular that it has been necessary to divide them into Elementary and Intermediate.

The latest technical development in Benesh Notation is a shorthand. Ever since it was launched by Margot Fonteyn the Benesh Notation owed its rapid progress to the fact that, apart from being more accurate and complete than preceding systems, it is also much faster. But extensive work under tough professional conditions has shown that even so it is not fast enough for all purposes: at rehearsal the notator has to take down a complex mass of material very quickly, and so Rudolf Benesh has developed a streamlined version of the standard notation in which symbols are run together in a cursive way, and all duplication of information is eliminated. The shorthand is also valuable to choreographers, enabling them to keep up with the most rapid flow of their invention.

An unusual honour

The Benesh Notation is already spreading to other countries, and there have been some interesting developments. In South Africa it has been adopted by the only permanent company, the Cape Town University Ballet, and is taught at the associated school: here notation is a university subject. When *Swan Lake* was produced for a festival in Johannesburg last year (with Margot Fonteyn as Odette-Odile) the Benesh score of the ballet was sent out for use by the producer, Dudley Davies. In Holland the Benesh Notation has been adopted by the Ballet of the Royal Nederlandsche Opera (Amsterdam).

Perhaps the most significant international development is the choice of the Benesh Notation for display among the major British achievements in science and technology in the British Government pavilion in the Brussels Exhibition this year. This is a great honour, for a good many British scientific achievements in recent years have been of major international importance, and it was hard to make a selection among them for a national "shop-window" which will be seen by millions from all over the world.

The Art of Mime

New Books

Mime, by Joan Lawson. (Pitman, 40*s*.)

JOAN LAWSON has written a well-informed book on mime and, when one considers the difficulties inherent in such an ambitious task, it is not surprising that it should be the first comprehensive monograph on the subject. It is written as a textbook and there are the inevitable classifications and groupings, bringing with them some overlapping of material because, as the author makes clear, no part of her subject can be contained in one closed compartment. Her style is relatively austere and the difficulty (almost impossibility) of using words to describe some detailed or complicated technical process means that an occasional passage does not make easy reading.

The work is not to be judged by its correctness, which is taken for granted, but it is certain to receive some criticisms for its selection and emphasis. Some dancers may hold that she should have devoted more space to sequences of classical mime; there will be other readers (myself among them) who would have liked her to extend the interesting historical material she has assembled; while some actors may protest because most of the examples she has used come from dance rather than drama. But the book is as valuable for the actor as it is for the dancer, and one question she asks is: how much of his rôle would an actor convey by mime and physical characteristics—if deprived of words? The references to Fokine, Ashton, de Valois and Fonteyn are fairly frequent—however, devotees of Marcel Marceau and Karsavina will be astonished because they are never mentioned.

Throughout the volume she adds valuable warning notes in all directions. The possible pitfalls of using a stock character (which will leave little mark because the audience have seen him before); of overloading a portrait and not keeping the subordinate elements subordinate; of showing off technique alone and of not getting "inside" a character and of slavishly following rules and generalizations; of not co-ordinating mime with music; of not recognizing the fundamental differences between male and female movement and of not bringing out the comparisons and their different reactions to situations, and so on, for there are many other warnings.

Moreover, one must be aware of the necessity of breathing new life into the stereotyped characters of ballet; of the need for economy of movement and of always having emotional and physical reserves to draw upon; the necessity of thinking a rôle out for one's self; the value of contrasting elements not only in characterization, but the use of rhythm and the physical effects which can be achieved through movements of relaxation and tension; and of the possibilities of group mime, as in the Mad Scene of *Giselle*.

I am pleased to see that she constantly stresses that the artist must not concentrate solely on the body (as with dancers who study only technique): the performer must get "inside" the character and appreciate the subtle changes that the emotions can make on the movements of any part of the body.

Dancers who have no idea where they stand (or who seek to be reminded) concerning the principles of an art which is an integral part of ballet, will find the time required for reading the volume well spent, and the general reader, intrigued to know what mime is all about at fundamental level, can get more than a glimpse and an enlightenment, particularly if he is prepared to experiment in front of a mirror. The book should prove a very durable *exposé* on the principles of mime.

Although some of Peter Revitt's illustrations are a little heavy (possibly due to the printing), they are a useful embellishment to the text.

E.C.M.

Half a Dozen of the Great

Six Great Dancers, by Mary Clarke. (Hamish Hamilton, 10*s*. 6*d*.)

ALTHOUGH these studies of Taglioni, Pavlova, Nijinsky, Karsavina, Ulanova and Fonteyn are not compounded of original research, the author freely acknowledges the sources she has used, listing them and inviting the reader to consult them for more detailed information. Because there is little that is new and few surprises, the book is not likely to appeal to the serious student. On the other hand, it is enchantingly and unassumingly written and should prove equally instructive and entertaining for the general reader to whom the author has obviously intended it to appeal.

Each study occupies about 40 pages and one senses at times that the author has found it difficult to compress her material into this unusual but by no means unnatural length. I am referring in particular to the study of Nijinsky, the details of whose life have been so fully documented that it is difficult to imagine one's self doing better within the author's limits. But even here she makes some valuable observations. On the fact that Nijinsky's still great reputation rests mainly on the performances he gave in Europe between 1909 and the outbreak of war in 1914, she writes: "The brevity of his career is one of the reasons for the inviolability of his fame: he did not dance long enough ever to give a bad performance."

Her essay on Taglioni cannot be faulted, and it is in many ways the most unmistakably useful of the studies in that there is so little in the way of information readily available on the life of this dancer.

Taking the volume as a whole, Mary Clarke has been successful in condensing her material into a very easily readable and gracefully written book. She has selected her ingredients carefully, removing inessentials and frequently filling out the duller facts with amusing asides of her own.

E.C.M.

Ten Years in the States

A Decade of Dance, by Ruth Bloomer and Constance Carney. Connecticut College, New London, Conn., $1.50.)

THIS forty-eight page volume, which is full of wonderful photographs, has been published to honour and celebrate the first ten years of the Connecticut College School of the Dance and its yearly summer American Dance Festivals. In these days of unsubsidized dance in America, it is indeed heartening to know that at least one college in the United States has the moral responsibility to be its patron.

Perhaps the most interesting section of this book is the one that records ten of the outstanding productions presented at these yearly festivals. Among these are works by Martha Graham, José Limón, Doris Humphrey, Sophie Maslow and Alwin Nikolais. Complete information as to casts, composers, set and costume designers are also included for the record. Also, there are notes on all of the guest artists who have appeared here during the past decade as well as a list of the scholarship awards made since 1953. Noteworthy, too, are the writings included here on the project by John Martin, Agnes de Mille, José Limón and others, all of which further attest to the validity and necessity "of artist, educator, administrator and student in an active working relationship for study and new production of student and professional works."

Arthur Todd

Dance and Dancers . . . . AT HOME

THE ROYAL BALLET (I) at Covent Garden

Fonteyn works a miracle

FOR two-thirds of *Sylvia*, on the night of the Royal Ballet's return to Covent Garden on February 19, Margot Fonteyn had me plumb worried. She seemed nervous and unsure of herself, rather stiff and prone to exaggeration. Not that she has ever really been at her best as the Amazon nymph of Diana of the first act or as the wily seductress of the second. Suddenly with her maritime entrance in the last act, the miracle happened and it was impossible to believe that the veiled and exquisite creature was the same person who had been responsible for our unspoken disappointment in the previous scenes.

How is it possible to look exquisite with a white veil over your head? It is something that only very great artists can achieve. Fonteyn enters, comes right down stage and then kneels and the whole line of her arms and the tilt of her head proclaims her a divinity. But all through this act she was tender, sublimely lyrical and completely sure of herself. This was the Fonteyn we know and love and whom we were happy to welcome home to her native heath. In her *pizzicato* variation and in her *pas de deux* with Somes she was dancing as well as we have ever seen her.

It is a long wait for this, the ballet's peak moment, but it is worth it. In its very understatement and its complete lyrical simplicity, Ashton has wrought one of his most endearing and effective *pas de deux*. Whereas most choreographers would, at this point, resort to a showy pyrotechnic display of technical complications, Ashton does quite the reverse and so wins the day. In fact this element of surprise is a noticeable feature of his choreography all through. Splendid though Delibes's score is, it is full of "obvious" dance moments. Ashton never falls into the trap of having his dancers working all-out at these moments and thus reducing the whole work to what could easily become the depths of banality—during many passages of lively tripping measures in the score there is frequently little action on the stage. It is in fact a masterpiece of choreographic construction which reveals his immaculate musicality.

Previous to the triumphant *pas de deux*, the main excitements of the evening had been Brian Shaw and Peter Clegg's cartwheeling slaves' cabaret number in the second act, Somes's always virile and handsome Aminta, John Hart's energetic and villainous Orion and

Alexander Grant's comic and lively Eros. In fact, in its principal rôles, this 63rd performance at Covent Garden had exactly the same cast as on its first performance on September 28, 1952.

Newcomers since then are Maryon Lane who was enchanting as the female sacrificial goat in the last act divertissement. Everything she did was precise and technically perfect, adding to her soubrette charm. In the not very rewarding rôle of Apollo, David Drew showed that he has a beautiful line and style; he made the greatest impression of any of the several male dancers who have undertaken this part.

The *corps de ballet* appeared to be in very good shape apart from some brief moments in the first act when some Sylvans and Dryads got a bit undisciplined and a few of Sylvia's attendant Nymphs showed a certain lack of military precision. The orchestra, under Robert Irving's baton, did full justice to Delibes' score and succeeded in filling the opera house with a remarkably pleasant noise.

P.W.

Next month there will be full reviews of the revival of *The Prince of the Pagodas*, Ashton's *Scènes de Ballet* and the various appearances of Robert Helpmann.

ROYAL BALLET (II) at the Granada, Sutton

Heaton as Odette

THE main reason for taking the 6.40 daily-breaders' special from Victoria to Sutton was to get the reaction of a non-West End audience to Kenneth MacMillan's *The Burrow*. The Granada, Sutton, is a vast theatre and it was packed to the brim.

The opening work was the second act of *Le Lac des Cygnes* with Anne Heaton as Odette and Donald MacLeary as Prince Siegfried. Heaton has the makings of a very good Odette but her performance is uneven. Occasionally she takes on all the grandeur of a Russian ballerina but this is followed by movements that are perfectly correct technically but completely lacking in lyrical flow. A fault, I am afraid, that is rather typical of many of the younger Wells-trained dancers.

There is probably no more lyrical act in all classical ballet than this and it is essential for the ballerina to give every movement complete continuity, and this can be achieved by a turn of the head or the bend of an arm as it moves down the body and a general broadening of all movements. Odette's rôle is one long poetic sigh with no punctuation, and this is where so many English-trained dancers fall short. One would think that the Tchaikovsky music and the very mood of the act would make this clear, but unfortunately they are so busy thinking of immaculate technique that they overlook the essence of the interpretation. Heaton did, however, achieve one magnificent moment and that was at the end of the *coda* as she was being lifted off Benno's knee by MacLeary. He held her up very high and then slowly, very slowly, lowered her to the ground. In that one moment both of them created the sort of magical moment we still sit through familiar works in the hope of seeing.

MacLeary's Siegfried is still immature and tentative. He also should guard against poking his head forward too much but he is such a good partner that one almost forgives him these faults. He should, and this applies to almost every English dancer who plays Siegfried apart from Somes, give more thought as to why he is there and exactly what he is supposed to be doing. He is taken to an unfamiliar place to hunt swans, he is filled with a melancholy which he does not understand, suddenly he is confronted by a beautiful girl who only a few moments before had been a swan gliding across a lake. What then should be his reaction to all this? When he first enters he should surely be a rather hearty young man intent on the excitements of the chase, gradually the strange atmosphere of this lake-side secret place should affect him; he sees the swans and his blood is up; suddenly a strange metamorphosis takes place off stage and what he thought was a swan becomes a lovely girl with whom he instantly falls in love and his whole mood changes. From then on he becomes the passionate lover and all thought of blood-sport has evaporated. Frankly this is what I seldom observe in English dancers as Prince Siegfried. But MacLeary is a dancer who improves all the time and I am sure that with greater familiarity with these rôles his interpretation will gain added maturity.

There is a moment in the ballet, which everyone must know, when the swans are grouped on the prompt-side of the stage in fear and trembling at the collection of huntsmen with bows drawn posed to shoot. In all these girls there was one, and only one, who registered the sort of fear which bird, human or beast would inevitably show when faced with such a situation. Looking carefully I saw that this girl was Noreen Sopwith who used to be a star of Ballet Rambert. The rest of the Royal Ballet girls looked too *blasé* about the whole thing for all words and that, I am afraid, is how they looked all through the ballet.

A well-balanced programme

A gasp of surprise went up from the audience as the curtain rose on Georgiadis's setting for MacMillan's *The Burrow*. To them it seemed such a strange and harsh contrast to the first ballet. But as this essay, or series of essays, in the reaction to fear progressed, so did their attention become riveted. This work was reported in full in the March issue of DANCE AND DANCERS and there is little more to add other than that it was equally effective away from Covent Garden and it was very well received by the Sutton public. If anything, Heaton's and Britton's performances were better with many new touches added. Elaine Thomas took over the rôle of the young female adolescent at short notice, as Lynn Seymour had hurt her foot, and although her performance lacked the poignantly touching quality of the rôle's creator, she gave a performance that in no way let the whole work down. It was most gratifying to see that my first extremely favourable impression of this work was endorsed by a less sophisticated public.

A rather condensed and cut-down *Veneziana* finished the programme. Although Andrée Howard intended this work for a large stage and although the smaller number of dancers obviated any kind of mass effect, this ballet stood up well to its transplanting. In fact the whole programme was excellently arranged and everything added up to a thoroughly enjoyable evening in the theatre; it was about as well balanced a programme as could be seen anywhere.

P.W.

Alexander as Swanilda

HAVING been intrigued but unimpressed by Susan Alexander's appearance in the title-rôle of the ballet *Giselle* during the company's Christmas season at Covent Garden, I welcomed the opportunity of going to Sutton to see her attempt another rôle in the classic repertory, that of Swanilda in *Coppelia*.

To start with, the part suits her far better than did the romantic agonies of Giselle. Her attractive personality was given a chance to breathe. The primary virtue of her dancing, its bright sparkle, had the opportunity to make its full effect, and, most important of all, her quite considerable intelligence could be brought to bear on a characterization well within her dramatic range.

The character variations in the second act were given with great aplomb, and elsewhere her dancing, though lacking the complete assurance of instinctive style, largely made up for the tentativeness of its detail by the youthful confidence of her approach. Her arm movements are insufficiently rounded, her back has still to become the supple Stradivarius of a ballerina, and the natural handicap of a slightly short neck has yet to be completely overcome by her teachers. In many places her musical phrasing was good, but sometimes she let the music run away with her, most noticeably in her last act solo. So long as she is not given the press agent's build-up which so adversely affected the dancing career of Moira Shearer—a dancer with whom she has something superficially in common—and is allowed to progress inevitably and gradually, her future could well be an important one. In five years time she could even be dancing a *Giselle* at Covent Garden that stick-in-the-muds like myself are willing to cheer.

She was admirably partnered by a Frantz also new to London and its suburbs, Alexander Bennett. His characterization had clarity and directness, and his dancing in the last act was very probably the best I have seen from him. Masculine and forceful, it suffered chiefly from a lack of space. It was a vigorously danced portrayal well worthy to be placed alongside the three other excellent interpretations currently shown by the company, which at the moment has almost an embarrassment of Frantzs.

The Dr. Coppelius, Stanley Holden, was certainly not new, but rather an old friend we had lost touch with, and it was a very great pleasure to renew his acquaintance. Together with Hart and Zolan, Holden gives by far the most satisfactory and satisfying characterizations this part has ever received in British ballet. His crazy, doddering old toymaker retains many of the foibles—that ridiculous trick of ceremoniously folding up his cloak only to sling it in the dust, for instance—which we affectionately remember from five years ago. But it would not be Holden if he were not continually trying to add new touches that had the spontaneity of ad libs and the conscious care of artistry. Immediately after this performance he was transferred or translated (whatever does one call it in these days of full integration?) to that other part of the woods which exists at Covent Garden, and one can only hope that his unique aptitude for comic acting will not be lost among all those trees.

C.B.

DANCE LECTURES

BERYL GREY

On Ballet in the Soviet Union

A lecture sponsored by London Ballet Circle on January 30

AFTER the enormous amount of publicity given to Beryl Grey's triumphant success as the first Western ballerina to visit Russia, it was hardly surprising that almost 1,000 people were present at her lecture. Though much of her material had already appeared in *The Sunday Times*, she did for this occasion enlarge on the aspects of exclusively balletic interest which she had not written about.

Stressing that her four and a half weeks there were spent as a dancer and not as a tourist, she spoke solely of theatre life rather than social conditions. In every theatre she danced in she found an atmosphere of complete calm and an absence of panic. Apart from the Ministry of Culture whose officials never seemed to meet her at the various airports, everything was beautifully arranged for

her. At the Bolshoi, she said, every detail matters and there is time to take care. All work is completed ahead of time and if a production is not ready it is just not presented.

No last-minute rehearsals were planned and when she asked why, her partner, Kondratov, explained: "We think here that it is not possible to improve a performance at the last moment." Her first rehearsals concentrated on steps, the next on the dramatic and expressive sides of the rôle, the following on the music, and the final rehearsal a "polishing" one on stage.

A Flexible Approach

To her surprise, it appeared, the ballet mistress was flexible in her approach—for at the Bolshoi, we were informed, every dancer is produced as an individual artist with an individual style. And, said Beryl Grey, it is very exciting to be produced there yourself: it was Semeyonova who helped to coach her personally in the choreography of their version of *Le Lac des Cygnes*. And while throughout the tour she was obliged to learn versions of *Giselle* and *Le Lac des Cygnes*, no suggestion was ever made that she should alter her own style in any way. It was, in fact, her own style which all were anxious to inspect. Messerer himself stayed back each day after rehearsals to help her write everything down, while Yuri Faier, ever ready to discuss *tempi* and play for rehearsals, made his time hers.

Her heavy schedule prevented her from watching classes at the Bolshoi. She nevertheless managed to see Khachaturian's new work, *Spartacus*, in rehearsal: a performance (in a version different to ours) of *The Sleeping Beauty* with Struchkova, and Plissetskaya in *Le Lac des Cygnes*.

At the Bolshoi Theatre there are three large rehearsal rooms on the top (the fifth) floor—one of which has a floor raked like the stage—and each artist's dressing room is equipped with a mirror and *barre*.

She also danced in Kiev, Leningrad and Tiflis, but outside the Bolshoi, she said, the standard was not as high as one would expect—although the beautiful character dancing in Tiflis and the strong male lifts in Kiev impressed her. It was also interesting to learn that the versions of the classics differ considerably in the various Soviet companies. At the Bolshoi the last act of *Le Lac des Cygnes* was entirely different from the version we know, but at Kiev, on the other hand, she found this act quite similar to the Royal Ballet's production. In Georgia (at Tiflis) she learnt a version of *Giselle* which had an unusual ending. Giselle, instead of disappearing into her grave to rest, climbs on to a bed of roses and, before departing, mimes to Albrecht that he is to marry Bathilde—an ending which, needless to say, hardly won her approval. Generally speaking, she found that the Russians were quite unnaturally keen on stage effects, in consequence of which she spent a large amount of performance time rushing up ladders and rising or descending through trapdoors.

When answering questions, another interesting revelation was that—at the Bolshoi at least—there is a tendency to replace classical-traditional mime with either more realistic mime or passages of dance. Concerning costumes, she did not admire the old-fashioned breeches (breaking the line) worn by the male dancers over their tights, nor did she like the heavy old-fashioned make-up used by the men.

It must also be put on record that throughout this long lecture she displayed a most poised and charming platform manner. She is undoubtedly one of the most engaging and unaffected speakers on dance that we possess and, so fortunately, she has a light touch, never taking herself too seriously.

E.C.M.

RUMANIAN DANCERS

IT is perhaps only my stupidity, but I have the greatest difficulty—or, for let us face facts, I find it impossible—to distinguish between one South East Europen dance company and another. Yugoslav, Bulgarian, Rumanian or Hungarian, they all look frighteningly alike to me. I have never seen the Greeks, but would be willing to take a small bet that I would prove hardly more successful in picking them out.

Our latest visitors from that part of the twisted globe were the Rumanian National Dance and Music Company, who, rushing into the breach left by the Danish Tivoli Pantomime, opened at the Princes Theatre on January 20 for a brief season.

There was with this company, to my immense relief, none of the fancy peasant oratorio business that I usually find so depressing on these occasions. Instead we had a fine-sounding gypsy orchestra, that I would have welcomed as an accompaniment to dinner or, at a pinch, even luncheon, but foodless and, more significantly, wineless, I found its attraction palling after the first half a dozen numbers. Without doubt the best of the orchestral items was one in which all the players left the stage one by one until only a very woebegone double-bass player was left; this rustic version of Haydn's Farewell Symphony had a theatricality that was too frequently lacking in the rest of the programme.

The dancers themselves, only 16 altogether, had previous to their London season enjoyed a quite considerable success on TV. Unfortunately what had proved mightily effective during a brief TV spot seemed rather less attractive when strung out through an entire evening.

The dancers had plenty of vivacity and vitality, and the unaffected pleasure they took in their dancing came over the footlights with infectious enthusiasm. Yet more than any of the other national dance groups we have seen in recent years, this small Rumanian troupe suffered from a monotonous sameness in the choreographic conception of their repertoire.

Number after number, or so it seemed, was built upon the circular structure of the Rumanian national dance, the *hora*, and the choreographic image of a circle breaking into four parallel lines was consistently evoked.

All the dances appeared to have received precious little choreographic translation from their original basic form to make them theatrically palatable. The same absence of showmanship of which this was symptomatic also revealed itself in the rejection of stage settings or any dances that included, if only for the sake of variety, an element of folklore or narrative.

On the credit side of the balance sheet could be put, beside the liveliness of the young dancers, the bright and cheerful costumes. At times this Rumanian show had sparkle and champagne zest. Yet the bubbles in even the best champagne subside, and well before the end the evening had become as flat, if not as dull, as ditchwater.

C.B.

NADIA NERINA
at the Palace Theatre

WHEN Nadia Nerina appeared for a month's season at the Palace Theatre, opening on January 20, in a variety bill as a supporting act to pop singer Frankie Vaughan, she was not making history. At this very same theatre—years before—Pavlova herself had appeared in variety, and right up to the outbreak of the last war there were numerous examples of ballerinas and their partners letting down their hair far enough to be seen by the great music-hall public. Since the war the practice had faded out, but then, so almost has music-hall.

On the face of it I am always delighted to see any dancer seeking a popularity outside of the tiny ballet public. I am all for dancers appearing in parish halls, on TV, round African camp-fires, in films, indeed in any place or on any medium where their art can reach out to touch new people. Yet I fail to see why any development should be associated with a lowering of standards. If a girl could dance the *Don Quixote pas de deux* on the uttermost end of Wigan Pier as well as she can dance it at Covent Garden, so well and good. If not, I would prefer her not to make the attempt.

Nerina's programme consisted of two contrasted Swans, Black and White—and this mental association with the brand name of my favourite whisky seemed to be the only intoxicating thing about an otherwise very sober-sided performance.

The White part was a reconstruction of the Pavlova/Fokine *The Dying Swan*, in a version that, to judge from photographs and memories of the Pavlova film, seemed to be far more authentic choreographically than any we are used to. Despite this, however, it remained more an interesting exercise than a living dance. Nerina's phrasing and sense of style, her characterization and power of projection have all to catch up with a technique, that in itself has few equals in the Western world. Nerina is the superlative executant and while she can produce a physical thrill of astonishment, the enjoyment she gives is only occasionally to the mind or heart. So it was with *The Dying Swan*. Simple, unaffected dancing, almost beautifully performed, yet all in tasteless good taste.

Tiller Girls go to the Ball

The rest of her spot was given over to the *Black Swan pas de deux*. To give the ballerina time to change the colour of her plumage, the *pas de deux* was introduced by what looked like a bedraggled parody of the ballroom scene in *Swan Lake*, in a form quite literally as distorted and condensed as a battered beef-cube. Against a pallid setting Nerina's partner, Veit Bethke, surrounded by an assortment of Tiller Girls in period costume, pranced around to the music of the Fiancée's Dance, unconsciously provoking much merriment from the audience and giving me a pain similar to acute indigestion.

When Nerina eventually made her triumphal entry—and it came not a moment too soon—it was to dance a performance of the famous *pas de deux* that seemed on the occasion I saw it, just about one-tenth as effective as the one with which she and David Blair customarily stop the show at Covent Garden in the full-length ballet.

The stage did not help, the setting did not help, the orchestra seemed a hindrance and her partner an embarrassment, while the strain of Odile twice nightly was probably making demands upon even Nerina's remarkable stamina. To me it was like seeing Piccadilly Circus during a power cut, but I realize that her performance was not primarily intended to appeal to the ordinary ballet-goer. Consequently I feel it apposite to quote—as a criticism far more relevant, if you like, than any I might make—a remark I overheard from a girl who was pulsatingly obviously more a fan of Frankie Vaughan than the ballerina. She said, with sinister finality: "Well, I didn't think much of that!" Now this was a comment I have never heard about Nerina's *Black Swan* at Covent Garden. Nor do I think I would have heard it at the Palace Theatre had she danced it flat out, and with a partner equal to her own abilities. At the sight of Nerina in full cry I challenge even the bobbiest of bobby-soxers not to cheer, or, perhaps more likely, shriek.

C.B.

TELEVISION

The World Our Stage

A special programme devoted to Dance. Given on BBC Television on February 8. Narrated by Jack Hawkins. Producer, Francis Essex.

THIS programme started off very much on the wrong foot and hardly ever rose much above the level of mediocrity. Any compère with a lighter and more sophisticated touch would, I think, have been preferred to the heavy pomposity of Jack Hawkins, whom one suspects does not care for dance anyway—so insincere did his comments ring.

The best items were Jacqueline Mackenzie, whose clever piece of miming must have been appreciated by viewers who can't dance, Elizabeth Seal and Irving Davies, and Rowena Jackson and Philip Chatfield in the "Black Swan" *pas de deux*.

For once it is nice to be able to write that the worst numbers came from the Continent, and in this category, the Ballet Ignatow, a Russian troupe televised from Antwerp, merits first mention. It is of the accordion band school; the men clad in *Boutique Fantasque* Cossack costumes surrounding a very sad Odalisque in zouave breeches and really far too tall to be on *pointes*. The second excerpt from the Continent was Chin Yu, a hand dancer. She is one of those delicate Oriental creatures and pleasant to look at even if her "dancing" appears to be extremely ugly.

But nothing was more banal than the short play, *The Dancing Lesson*, obviously by an apprentice script writer. Nor was it helped by the fact that John Gregson (terribly cricket!), Sarah Lawson and Leslie Phillips did not spare themselves in giving it the acting it so richly deserved.

Rowena Jackson and Philip Chatfield showed that they were in excellent form despite their recent arduous tour. As always, her turns were brilliantly executed and, visually, the most exciting part of the whole programme. However, in carrying her leg into *arabesque* from *pirouettes*, I thought that she seemed a little stiff. But this could possibly have been due to the camera angles, for *arabesques* should never be seen in a foreshortened three-quarter view. The décor—actually lighting more than décor—did not help them. Her black tutu of course disappeared when seen against a thick black line effect across the centre of the screen, and the thicker black shadows at the sides.

Finally, Alan Melville's witty little couplets gave the programme a lift, and by their contrast to the rest of the script showed just how badly this department had let the programme down. If this type of omnibus programme is ever to be taken seriously, what is needed are better scripts, more careful programme planning so that viewers are not tortured with rubbish transmitted from the Continent, and, on the lighter side of dance, someone with the bubble of, say, Jessie Matthews.

E.C.M.

Le Rendez-vous Manqué

Excerpts presented by Independent Television in Granada's *Chelsea at Nine* on February 11.

TONI LANDER
VLADIMIR SKOURATOFF
NOELLE ADAM

WHETHER *Le Rendez-vous Manqué* is good ballet or not, or whether it can even be termed "ballet" will be known by many readers by the time this number appears. Whether only the highlights were given as shrewd advance publicity will also be known. But, highlights or not, the fact remains that these generous extracts made first-class television entertainment.

Unfortunately, these selections gave Toni Lander little scope. One can only say that she danced very well indeed through the many lifts of an intricate *pas de deux*. Moreover, her costume, smart for street wear, did not seem to drape well in movement. Vladimir Skouratoff appeared to be too enigmatic in his rather obscure rôle.

Noëlle Adam was seen to best advantage, being in longer scenes and seldom out of camera range. She has a definite pneumatic grace and a "line" all her own, paying no coin to the ballet axiom that the hips should be square under her.

In the Surprise Party scene, which came over particularly well, the boys in the *corps* seemed better than the girls. The Clock Pendulum dance (by John Taras) seemed to me to be one of the most ingenious, but economical, pieces of choreography seen for some time.

Throughout the programme the camera direction was extremely able and there was never a feeling of cramped space. It was done almost entirely in long-shots; consequently there were none of the usual decapitations. One effective close-up of Lander's and Skouratoff's hands clasped in the opening section could, I thought, have been held a fraction longer. But despite my few reservations, these generous extracts proved to be very good entertainment, fully justifying Independent Television's new policy of offering the best in dance entertainment.

Also in this programme each week are The Granadiers, a team which both sings and dances and whose choreography is prepared by Mark Stuart. He deserves praise for his pleasant, effective and original movement. Finally, at one moment during the programme, the compère, Jack Hawkins, was seen wearing a tartan jacket while seated in a large leather-covered chair. I thought we were in for a parody on *La Sylphide*!

E.C.M.

KEEP YOUR HAIR ON

A musical written, devised and directed by John Cranko. Music by John Addison. Scenery by Tony Armstrong Jones. Costumes by Desmond Heeley. Lighting by Michael Northen. First given at the Apollo Theatre, London, on February 13, 1958.

THERE must, I suppose, have been a moment long before the unfortunate and noisy first night when Cranko realized that a "book" musical is something very different to a revue with only four people and a piano. Having got the idea, written it all and committed himself to direct it, I can imagine that he must have suddenly found himself trapped, but in spite of some kind of internal near-panic he ploughed on. That anyway is how it appeared to me by the second performance because nothing was really resolved—ideas and situations were never developed or, what was even worse, they sometimes became over-developed. What a pity that the show could not have opened on the road, then have been pruned and burnished for six weeks before being hurled to the Shaftesbury Avenue wolves whose over-licked chops were just waiting, it seemed, to make mincemeat of it all. A sad fate for a British musical which feverishly tried in its off-beat way to get off the over-beaten-down track.

The involved plot, like a grab-machine, snatched at political satire, social behaviour, slapstick comedy and sentimental romance; snatched but never held. All the ingredients you would have thought for the kind of musical comedy we so badly need. What then went wrong?

Obviously this musical would never have happened if it had not been for *Cranks*. But *Cranks* was originally devised for a coterie audience as an after-dinner charade to be given in a cellar below the Strand and it was just the thing for the Watergate Theatre audience. Bolstered up by its deserved success and the fact that Princess Margaret attended a rehearsal, the revue tagged around from West End theatre to West End theatre with no small measure of success. New York did not take to it very kindly, apart from the American equivalent of the coterie audience which deemed it a great "artistic" success. It was more generally and genuinely acclaimed in Copenhagen and Mexico City.

The next step from that would be, on the face of it, a "book" musical employing many of the twists, turns, quips and cranks which had distinguished Cranko's first revue. Unfortunately a musical with a story concerns an elaboration of human relationships; it also requires a far more complicated form of production than is ever necessary in a revue with its brief few-minute scenes. It is here that something has crept up behind Cranko and caught him unawares. Having been caught unawares, Cranko then made the fatal mistake of choosing a cast who, without exception, could not sing. John Addison's off-beat score would tax an artist as great and with as innate a musical sense as Frank Sinatra. It was tragic to see people like Erik Mörk, one of Denmark's finest young actors, being crucified in seemingly endless sentimental ditties and this applied to almost everybody with the exception of Betty Marsden and Gilbert Vernon.

Betty Marsden, as a public figure somewhere between Lady Docker and Mrs. Gerald Legge, lifted the show on her every appearance. Admittedly she cannot sing but she is professional enough and has had enough revue training to be able to obscure this inability behind a strong theatrical personality.

Gilbert Vernon, ex-Royal Ballet soloist, was not really asked to sing but he was assigned a most difficult acting rôle. As a Cockney who poses as a phoney French hairdresser he succeeded most admirably. He, too, brought the show to life on his every appearance. But considering he is a most accomplished dancer you would have thought that Cranko could have devised something more interesting for him to do than a rather banal series of *pirouettes*. Somewhere there is a rôle that should exploit Vernon's undoubted personality and ability to the full.

But after praising these two, together with Nicholas Amer's zany spiv Dave, and Debbie Hamilton's sprightly girl in patent leather pumps, I am afraid that the performances were below University undergraduate standard—and that went for the production too. The whole show was sadly lacking in construction, the plot rambled hopelessly and never built up, musical numbers followed each other for no apparent reason and, worst of all, Cranko did not seem to know how to get his characters on and off the stage. Occasional brilliant touches lit everything up for a few brief moments, but then we sank back again to the tiresome complications of the story. It seemed that Cranko had taken bits from Brecht, Dhery, Les Frères Jacques and various Paris left-bank revues but had been quite unable to colour the whole with any of his undoubted personality and genius.

Tony Armstrong Jones achieved some quite effective settings from blown-up photographs and photo-montage and they would undoubtedly have been far more effective had they been lit with anything like imagination. Desmond Heeley's costumes were an unhappy mixture of grotesque masked creatures (very old-fashioned and 'thirties middle European) and very realistic contemporary sacks.

It is sad when somebody fails at a sincere attempt at injecting new life into British musicals but Cranko is tough and doubtless he will learn from this very bitter lesson that amateurishness and pretentiousness are the two ugly sisters who will *never* be accepted at the ball which is the professional theatre.

P.W.

FRANCE

THE PARIS OPÉRA

AS Yvette Chauviré recently observed in this magazine, *Giselle* is as much a test piece for the male dancer as for the ballerina. In effect it amounts to this—many are called upon to appear in these rôles but few really get there. It so happens that some great artists, such as Jean Babilée, fail and others show themselves to be purely technicians. Therefore, everyone awaited with much impatience Peter Van Dijk's début which was finally scheduled for January 22.

Through his extremely personal and original conception of Albrecht, Van Dijk showed from the outset that he could rank with his most illustrious predecessors. Romantically inspired, he maintained an obvious reserve and an air of nobility and restrained passion which overpowered some of the audience. He has the rare ability of being able to harmoniously blend acting and dancing, or, to put it better, he is an actor who expresses himself in dancing, and only by that.

On the same evening he was also given the responsibility of replacing Michel Renault in *Etudes* at the last moment. Leaving to Alexandre Kalioujny, the creator, his usual rôle, Van Dijk made a very good impression in his impromptu début in place of his colleague who was ill.

On January 29, George Skibine reappeared as the Prince in *Firebird* with Marjorie Tallchief. Still a little heavy as a result of the accident which prevented him from dancing for a year, he gave a much more simple and popular interpretation than Youly Algaroff, the creator of this rôle at the Opéra. Josette Amiel as the Princess was too affected and simpering to make one forget the performances given by Christiane Vaussard.

As a result of new disputes the *corps de ballet* refused to dance in Wednesday performances. Consequently *Faust* replaced *Les Noces Fantastiques* on February 12. Following the frequent strikes, there now has arisen the question of having to close the Opéra and dismissing most of the company until the various disagreements have been settled.

BELLA REINE

AT the Musée Guimet on February 12, Bella Reine presented a programme of mime, entitled *Sourires et Larmes*. Using music by Milhaud, Poulenc, Prokofiev, Sauguet and Cliquet-Pleyel, she presents short numbers which differ considerably in mood. By far the most interesting part of her programme on this occasion was a suite of mimed sketches inspired by famous paintings: especially 75 poses of Degas dancers and Toulouse-Lautrec's *La Repasseuse*. Bella Reine knows how to combine detailed observation, stage sense and an unusually fine understanding of the styles she must use.

NEWS IN BRIEF

ON February 14 at the Théâtre de l'Alhambra Roland Petit presented a new programme which was almost exclusively dancing. Renée Jeanmaire danced often and sang a little in *La Rose des Vents*, which has a libretto by Albert Vidalie, music by Milhaud, and décor by Basarte (a cousin of Clavé). The other two creations were *Contrepoint*, a divertissement by Marius Constant with décor by Poliakoff and Nicole Amigues and Rino Adipietro as leading dancers, and, in homage to Méliès, *La Dame dans la lune*, with music by Jean Françaix, décor by Edouard Dhermitte, and danced by Veronika Mlakar and Dick Sanders. To complete this interesting programme, on which we will write in detail in a later number, *Carmen* was revived.

AT Lyon, the company of Françoise and Dominique presented several new works of which the most interesting was *Clarté d'Ombres* with choreography by Deryck Mendel and music by Villa-Lobos.

IN the spring the Théâtre des Nations will welcome London's Festival Ballet, the Berlin State Opera and the American Ballet Theatre.

LÉONORE FINI has almost completed the designs for a new work which will be choreographed by Janine Charrat to music by Auric. This ballet will be presented during the World Fair at Brussels.

AT the Université de la Danse which he recently founded, Serge Lifar organized a very interesting discussion on January 18. This was illustrated by Olga Adabache who danced extracts from *Chota Roustaveli* and Richard Strauss's *Salomé*. On February 15, Jacques Feschotte, who is the director of the Ecole Normale de Musique, lectured on "Dance in the Work of Balzac," while Tessa Beaumont danced several *variations* by Petipa and Lifar.

Marie-Françoise Christout

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THE GOLOVINE BROTHERS: Left, George Golovine, a younger brother of Serge Golovine, with Daphne Dale, previously a dancer with London's Festival Ballet. These two new stars of the Marquis de Cuevas Grand Ballet are seen in Skibine's The Prisoner in the Caucasus. *Right, Serge Golovine with Nina Vyroubova in Lifar's recent* pas de deux, Duettino, *also for the de Cuevas company.* *Photos: Lido*

AMERICA

NEW YORK CITY BALLET

Gounod Symphony

First given by New York City Ballet at New York City Center Theatre on January 7, 1958. Choreography by George Balanchine. Music by Charles Gounod (Symphony No. 1 in D Major). Scenery by Horace Armistead. Costumes by Karinska. Lighting by Nananne Porcher.

FIRST MOVEMENT: Allegro Molto
MARIA TALLCHIEF
JACQUES D'AMBOISE
and Corps de Ballet

SECOND MOVEMENT: Allegretto
MARIA TALLCHIEF
JACQUES D'AMBOISE
and Ensemble

THIRD MOVEMENT: Minuetto
Ensemble

FOURTH MOVEMENT: Adagio and *Allegro Vivace*
Full Company

IN his memoirs Gounod said that he wrote his Symphony in D major "to console myself for the disappointment" of the failure of *La Nonne Sanglante* in the autumn of 1854. This opera had only eleven performances; no publisher would engrave the orchestral score and Scribe, the librettist, refused to collaborate again with Gounod.

The *andante* and *scherzo* of Gounod's First Symphony were performed by Pasdeloup at a concert of the Jeunes Artistes on February 4, 1855. The entire symphony was played a month later. On both occasions audience and critics were enthusiastic. The composer of *Giselle*, Adolphe Adam, said that Gounod, having proved what he could do in the theatre, now showed that he was a symphonist of the highest order.

A piano reduction of Gounod's Symphony in D for four hands was made by his disciple Georges Bizet in 1855, only a few months before he composed his own Symphony in C at the age of seventeen.

The ballet audience of the New York City Center is already familiar with Bizet's two symphonies, the C major and the *Roma*. Now they will have the opportunity to compare the first symphonies of these two French composers, each of whom wrote only two symphonies.

In 1955, a hundred years after its première, Howard Shanet and the Columbia University Orchestra introduced Gounod's Symphony in D to the United States.—MINA CURTISS.

THIS large new ballet for the New York City Ballet features Maria Tallchief and Jacques d'Amboise together with an *ensemble* of thirty dancers. Like *Symphony in C*, it is a plotless ballet, but it is considerably more lyrical.

Visually, this is one of the company's most sumptuous productions though I found that the use of Horace Armitage's décor from *Lilac Garden* was not quite in keeping with the period and colours of Karinska's mid-19th century ballet dresses, which were bright pink over yellow and vice versa. When the City Center's small stage was crowded with dancers in these costumes, going through Balanchine's figurations, the stage picture was indeed quite ravishing. The men, however, did not come off nearly so well in their costumes and their short black pants, worn over grey tights, not only distracted from the movement line of their bodies but looked, at times, quite ludicrous.

John Martin, writing in the *New York Times*, found that: "For once Balanchine has outchoreographed even so accomplished a company as this, and it will take a great deal of dancing before they have mastered what he has given them to do." Aside from the technical demands of phrasing and virtuosity that he has set for his dancers, Balanchine has invented some of his most elaborate mass inter-weavings to date. To some in the audience this may have appeared as complex and engineered as the mass formations of the Black Watch Highland Musicians and Dancers, while the majority, and all of the New York press, hailed it as a rousing new hit. Despite its invention, its lovely *pas de deux* and its many intracacies, however, it appeared to me, at least, as being a superb music visualization and nothing more. In all fairness, however, it must be added, this is a minority view.

LINCOLN SQUARE DANCE COUNCIL

THE Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts has announced the formation of a thirteen-member Advisory Council for the Dance. John D. Rockefeller 3rd, president of the Center, has named Dr. George D. Stoddard, dean of the New York University School of Education, as temporary chairman. Other members are Martha Graham, Lucia Chase, Lincoln Kirstein, William Schuman, William Kolodney, Doris Duke, Reginald Allen, Blevins Davis, Mrs. S. Hallock DuPont, Julisu Fleischmann, Joseph Martinson and Edgar B. Young.

This council will act as the nucleus of the governing body that will select or create an autonomous dance institution to represent this

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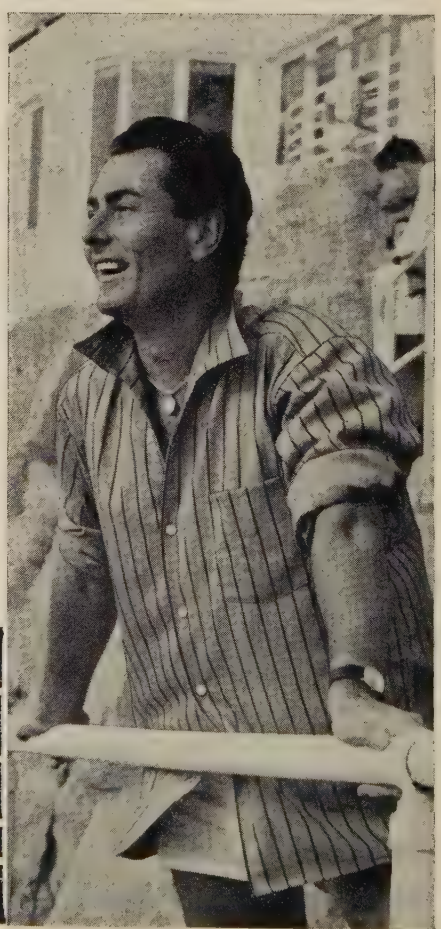

Vince

rt in the same centre that will include the Metropolitan Opera Association, the New York Philharmonic Society and the Juilliard School of Music and Dance. The functions of this council are, "first, to become the nucleus of the governing body that will select or create a resident company for the Lincoln Center Dance Theatre, which is to be completed in 1963; second, to co-operate with the Center's campaign committee in seeking funds for the construction of the theatre and for the creative development of the dance organization; and third, to assist in the planning of the theatre."

In a special release to the press, Dr. Stoddard claimed, "the art of the dance—a term regarded as more comprehensive than ballet—will have a central place in the programme of the Lincoln Center which will have a keen interest in presenting the best performances and an equal interest in fostering the talent of young artists interested in solo and ensemble dancing."

There is profound interest in this dance centre on the part of the American dance field as a whole but it is certainly to be hoped that the present plans for "a dance theatre to serve as a home for a major performing company" will not mean that this centre is to be occupied chiefly or entirely by any one company nor given over to any one form of dance. Certainly, too, this new dance theatre should be planned to accommodate the great dance companies of all types from all over the world that make appearances in New York.

DANILOVA'S BROADWAY MUSICAL

OH CAPTAIN, the musical version of the film *The Captain's Paradise*, has turned out as a routine but enormously successful Broadway musical that is noteworthy chiefly for the presence of Alexandra Danilova, who recently received this year's annual Capezio Award; the performance of its star, Tony Randall, and one male ensemble dance. James Starbuck is listed as choreographer but Onna White, who was responsible for *The Music Man*, was called in as dance consultant before the première so it is difficult to know just whom to praise and whom to blame.

Swinging back and forth from London to Paris, as this current plot does, gave a wonderful opportunity for contrasting the ways of dance and movement between England and France, but that has been completely overlooked. So, too, has been Danilova for neither the book nor the choreographers have made any serious attempt to use her really magnificent theatre talents. Instead, she is presented as a Parisian flower seller, a rôle in which she has a few lines, then shares a song with Tony Randall, and goes into a short dance. Hailing her contribution to this production, Walter Kerr, theatre critic of *The New York Herald-Tribune* wrote, "That Miss Danilova, for instance, . . . generates enough electricity in a few brief high-kicks to help run the production's two-track treadmill."

The only other noteworthy dance number is a dock workers' dance that is performed by the male ensemble and this is both inventive and amusing. Tony Randall, recently of Hollywood, moves extremely well and gives one of the most delightful, comic and polished performances on the Broadway musical stage this season. Otherwise, save for Danilova and Randall, nearly all else is banality at a high Broadway level.

MARCEL MARCEAU

INTERESTINGLY enough, during his highly successful four-week season at the New York City Center, Marcel Marceau, who is practically a one-man show, played to larger attendance and greater box office receipts than did the entire New York City Ballet during some of the weeks that they preceded his engagement.

This magnificent French mime is the essence of dance-theatre and his bodily movements seem capable of conveying almost anything in the range of human experience. Writing in a programme note, he states: "The art of Mime is a complete art in the sense that it tends toward an all-embracing definition of the human being. . . . Mime is an art of symbols. In the Western Art of Mime, these symbols amount to a system of conventions whereby the component parts of reality are broken down and stylised." These symbols are the Occidental counterpart of the Far Eastern style of dancing and, in his use of them, Marcel Marceau is a very great artist. As in previous seasons, there is wonderful assistance by Pierre Verry, who introduces the various numbers by holding up cards. Then, too, there is Gilles Ségal, who moves beautifully but is still too literal in his style because he has not yet learned the art of omission. The honours for these performances, however, still belong to Marcel Marceau, who is a dance mime in the great tradition.

DANILOVA'S NEW ROLE: Tony Randall and Alexandra Danilova in a dance scene from the new Broadway musical—Oh Captain.

Although this much-loved Russian ballerina has appeared before in musicals, notably in Waltzes from Vienna *at the London Alhambra in the early 'thirties, in this recent musical she had her first speaking rôle in anything other than ballet. Some years ago she did speak a few lines as Mrs. Potiphar in a ballet called* Billy Sunday.

On the recent first night in New York, Danilova was accorded a reception that has seldom been equalled.

Photo: Friedman-Abéles

DE MILLE ON TV

THIS hour-long concert version of the dances and music from *Paint Your Waggon*, a musical originally choreographed on Broadway by Agnes de Mille, was easily the most distinguished in the series of Seven Lively Arts television programme this season.

Using the talents of Gemze de Lappe and James Mitchell, who appeared in the original Broadway production, the balance of the dance cast included Sono Osato as guest star and members of the Agnes de Mille Dance Theatre. Since this latter group could easily each be soloists in their own right, the dance quality on this programme was of a very high quality indeed. Like the musical, this ballet was the story of a gold strike in the American Far West of a century ago. It deals with the hunt for and the striking of gold, the boom-town period with its arrival of the dance-hall girls, and, finally, the abandonment of the town when the gold strike runs out.

As on Broadway, the high point of this production was the stunning and communicative *pas de deux* for the two lovers, and Gemze de Lappe and James Mitchell danced it superbly. Elsewhere the ensemble provided strong support and it was most interesting the way that Agnes de Mille's focusing often on a single dancer in the group provided even the large numbers with fluidity on the small television screen.

IN BRIEF

MARTHA GRAHAM and her Dance Company open their first New York engagement in three years with a two-week season at the National Theatre commencing on April 1. Highlights of this season will be an as yet untitled evening-length work as well as a new dance for four soloists, *Embattled Garden*, to music by Carlos Surinach. Featured dancers in this will be Yuriko, Matt Turney, Bertram Ross and Glen Tetley.

BEFORE flying to London, Alicia Markova made two guest appearances in Havana, Cuba, before capacity audiences. Partnered by Michael Maule, Premier Danseur of the Metropolitan Opera, she appeared in *Swan Lake*, Act 2, with the Pro Arte Ballet, whose Director-General is Alberto Alonso.

Arthur Todd

LE CARNAVAL

continued from page 19

Valse Noble, Eusebius, Florestan, Coquette, Replique, Sphinxes (this is marked by the composer "not to be played," and it never is), *Papillons, Lettres, Dansantes, Chiarina, Chopin, Estrella, Reconnaissance, Pantalon et Columbine, Valse Allemande, Paganini, Aveu, Promenade, Paues, Marche des "Davidsbündler" contra les Philistins.* The full title of the score is *Carnaval, Scènes mignonnes sur 4 Notes pour Piano*, and the whole suite, apart from six pieces, is based on four notes sentimentally derived from the town of Asch, the birthplace of Schumann's "musical lady-friend," Ernestine von Fricken.

The first performance by the Diaghilev company was on May 20, 1910, at the Theater des Westens, Berlin, with a cast that included Karsavina, Nijinsky and Marie Piltz. The German response was favourable, but when the ballet was produced at the Paris Opéra on June 4—the date and place given by Mr. Beaumont and many subsequent authorities as the ballet's first performance—the reception was not so whole-heartedly enthusiastic. The cast for the Paris première included Karsavina (Columbine), Fokina (Chiarina), Schollar (Estrella), Nijinska (Papillon), Nijinsky (Harlequin), Adloph Bolm (Pierrot), Cecchetti (Pantalon) and Ivan Kussov (Florestan).

The French reaction was epitomized by Jean-Louis Vaudoyer (the poet who subsequently provided the inspiration for *Le Spectre de la Rose*) when he wrote: "Bergamo and Gaverni it may be have not revealed to these Russians the inner secrets of their grace. Their nonchalance perhaps seems somewhat forced, their interpretations perhaps too obvious, the sparkle overdone, and the whole a little too heavy. Perhaps it is all too reminiscent of German champagne." Lifar seems pertinent when he says: "European romanticism, as refracted through Russian prisms, could hardly satisfy French tastes." The truth of the matter would appear to be that the French having had an almost entirely derogatory opinion of ballet and having been pulled up in their traces by the colour and vigour of the exotic Ballets Russes, were still somewhat nervous in accepting, despite the lip-service of their critics to the dance theories of Mallarmé, that ballet had anything to offer more than the novelty of Tartar hordes and erotic bacchanales.

When, during the following year, *Le Carnaval* formed part of the opening programme of the first London season, it was enthusiastically reviewed (*The Times* calling it "an unqualified joy from beginning to end") and the ballet became a mainstay of the Diaghilev repertory. It passed through the hands of many interpreters (Idzikowki and Lopokova were particularly notable as Harlequin and Columbine), but unfortunately choreographic details appear to have become blurred, and its pristine simplicity was lost. Nor were the post-Diaghilev Ballets Russes revivals a great deal more satisfactory; here and there a Youskevitch (Harlequin), a Riabouchinska (Papillon), a Massine (Eusebius), would render the work first aid, but on the whole *Carnaval* was not a jewel in the repertory. An exception must be made of the production Fokine himself supervised for René Blum's Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo at the Alhambra Theatre in 1936. The remarkable thing is that despite indifferent performances the ballet is choreographically, dramatically, musically and scenically so sound that it can bear up under the slings and arrows of outrageous revival with some fortitude. The ballet is almost, though not quite—as Covent Garden once demonstrated—unsinkable.

(To be concluded next month)

COVER STORIES

This month's front cover, specially taken by Roy Round, is of Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes in Frederick Ashton's *La Péri*. They will appear in this ballet at the annual gala in aid of the Royal Ballet Benevolent Fund to be given at Covent Garden on March 27 in the presence of the Queen Mother and Princess Margaret.

MARGOT FONTEYN is the first British ballerina to have been fully developed in a British company. Born at Reigate, Surrey, in 1919, she went to her first dancing school at the age of four. In 1927 her family moved to Shanghai, where she continued her studies. During the latter part of her six years in the Far East she was taught by George Goncharov. On her return to England she went to Astafieva and in 1934 joined the Vic-Wells School. Filling in the gap left by the departure of Markova from the Vic-Wells Ballet in 1935, Fonteyn rapidly took over more and more important rôles. Her first created rôle was in Ashton's *Le Baiser de la Fée* in 1935 and since then he has created rôles for her which have grown in importance as she developed. As Ballerina Assoluta of the Sadler's Wells Ballet (now Royal Ballet) she has been acclaimed by the whole world. Honours have been showered upon her, but none so important as the award of D.B.E. in 1956. As wife of the Panamanian Ambassador to the Court of St. James, Fonteyn's rôle today is of double importance.

MICHAEL SOMES was born in Gloucestershire in 1917 and was trained at an early age by Miss Catherine Blott and also by Espinosa. In 1934 he won a scholarship to the Vic-Wells School, and was the first English dancer to achieve this distinction. He showed great progress and was soon taken into the Vic-Wells Ballet. For him, Ashton created the rôle of the Boy in *Horoscope* in 1937. In this ballet he danced with Fonteyn and it marked the beginning of a long partnership which has continued ever since. He has partnered her in almost every classical ballet and is one of the finest *danseurs nobles* of our time. Today he is the principal male dancer of the Royal Ballet from Covent Garden.

Ballet Dates

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Mar.
18 *Solitaire, The Firebird, Petrushka*
19 *Scènes de Ballet, The Rake's Progress, Petrushka*
20 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Nerina, Blair)
21 *Scènes de Ballet, Miracle in the Gorbals* (revival), *Les Patineurs*
22 (M) *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Fonteyn, Somes)
22 (E) *Les Patineurs, Miracle in the Gorbals, Coppélia* Act 3
24 *Solitaire, Miracle in the Gorbals, Daphnis and Chloe*
25 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, Chatfield)
26 *Coppélia* (Lane, Shaw)
27 Gala in aid of the Royal Ballet Benevolent Fund—*Solitaire, Hamlet* (revival), *La Péri, Divertissement*
28 *Les Patineurs, Hamlet, The Firebird*
29 (M) *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Nerina, Blair)
29 (E) *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Jackson, Chatfield)
31 *Les Sylphides, The Rake's Progress, The Lady and the Fool*

Apr.
1 *Les Patineurs, Coppélia* (Linden, Blair)
5 (M) *The Lady and the Fool, Hamlet, Coppélia* Act 3
9 *Les Sylphides, Hamlet, Ballet Imperial*
12 (M) *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Fonteyn, Somes)
12 (E) *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, Chatfield)
16 *The Shadow, Giselle* (Fonteyn, Somes)
17 *The Shadow, Giselle* (Beriosova, Chatfield)
19 (M) *Les Patineurs, Hamlet, Ballet Imperial*
21 *Les Sylphides, The Firebird, Petrushka*
23 *Solitaire, The Lady and the Fool, The Firebird*
26 (M) *Solitaire, Giselle* (Fonteyn, Somes)
Apr.
26 (E) *Solitaire, Giselle* (Nerina, Blair)
28 *Ballet Imperial, The Lady and the Fool, Petrushka*
30 *The Shadow, Giselle* (Fonteyn, Somes)

May
1 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Nerina, Blair)
2 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Beriosova, Chatfield)
3 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Jackson, Somes)

THE ROYAL BALLET
(formerly Sadlers Wells Theatre Ballet)
Provincial Tour

Mar.
17 The Palace, Plymouth
24 The New Theatre, Cardiff

Apr.
7 The Theatre Royal, Nottingham
14 The Coventry Theatre, Coventry
21 The Royal Court, Liverpool
28 Olympia Theatre, Dublin

May
5 Grand Opera House, Belfast (2 weeks)
19 The Grand Theatre, Blackpool
26 The Alhambra Theatre, Bradford

June
2 The Theatre Royal, Newcastle

July
7 The Opera House, Cheltenham (Festival)

FESTIVAL BALLET
Provincial Tour

Mar.
17 Empire Theatre, Liverpool
24 The Alhambra Theatre, Glasgow

Apr.
17-27 Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt, Paris
29-May 5 Théâtre de l'Opéra, Nice

May
9-21 Sao Carlos Opera House, Lisbon
24-27 Théâtre de l'Opéra, Marseilles

June
2-14 Israel
17-22 Staatstheater, Zurich
24-29 Deutsches Theater, Munich

July
7, 8 Théâtre de l'Opéra, Paris
11-13 Festival of Nervi, Genoa
14-Sept. 13 The Royal Festival Hall, London

BALLET RAMBERT

Mar.
17 The King's Theatre, Southsea
31 The New Theatre, Hull

Apr.
7 The White Rock Pavilion, Hastings

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EUROPEAN FESTIVALS - 1958

The following festivals have announced that they will present dance and ballet programmes. Full details will be given at the earliest possible date.

WIESBADEN—May 24-26, American Ballet Theatre; May 31. The State Opera Ballet of Belgrade in *The Devil in the Village* and in operas *Prince Igor* and *Katja Kabanova* on May 30 and June 1.
BORDEAUX—May 13-15, The Paris Opéra Ballet; May 25, Coros Y Danzas of Spain.
COPENHAGEN Royal Danish Ballet Festival—May 17, *La Ventana, Night Shadow, Graduation Ball*; May 18, *Romeo and Juliet*; May 20, *Serenade, Don Quixote, Moonreindeer, Fanfare*; May 21, *Coppélia*; May 22, *Chopiniana, Le Spectre de la Rose, Symphony in C*; May 23, *Concerto Barocco, Floral Fête, Variations, Apollon Musagetes*; May 24, *Et Folkesagn*; May 27, *The Pas de Quatre, Vision, The Nutcracker pas de deux, Fever, Skaelmeri*; May 29, *La Sylphide, Graduation Ball*; May 30, to be announced; May 31, *Serenade, Don Quixote, Moonreindeer, Fanfare.*
BERGEN (Norway)—May 30-June 15
ZURICH—June 17-23, London's Festival Ballet in *The Nutcracker* and other ballets.
STOCKHOLM—June 1-14, Swedish Royal Ballet in *The Sleeping Beauty, Coppélia, Gala Performance, Minotaurus*, etc.
HOLLAND (Amsterdam, The Hague)—June 15-July 15. Foreign and Dutch Ballet companies.
GRANADA—June 24, 25, Falla's *La Vida Breve* and *The Three-Cornered Hat* with Victoria de los Angeles and Antonio's Spanish Ballet. June 27-29, The Paris Opéra Ballet. July 3, 4, Antonio's Spanish Ballet.
DUBROVNIK—July 1-Aug. 31, The Belgrade Opera Ballet in *The Devil in the Village, Giselle, El Amor Brujo, La Reine des Iles* (middle of August). Ensemble of Serbian Folk Dancers (end of July). Ensemble of Croatian Folk Dancers (beginning of August). Ensemble of Macedonian Folk Dancers (end of August).
GENOA—The Festival of Nervi, beginning to end of July. Dancers of the Royal Ballet with Beriosova and Blair. London's Festival Ballet. Members of the Royal Danish Ballet and several other companies.
SANTANDER—July 25-August 31. Antonio's Spanish Ballet. American Ballet Theatre. Mariemma's Spanish Ballet. Coros Y Danzas of Spain.
ATHENS—August 1-September 15.
EDINBURGH—August 24-September 13. Ballet Premières.
VENICE—September 11-28.
PERUGIA—September 20-October 5.
BERLIN—September 21-October 7.

NEXT MONTH

In the May issue of DANCE AND DANCERS on sale April 19

LOOK FOR

Recent production in Germany, specially at Stuttgart and Frankfurt, by OTTO REGNER. Pictures and opinion of the recent works by ROLAND PETIT in Paris. More pictures of LEONIDE MASSINE. Pictures and opinion of ROBERT HELPMANN'S return to Covent Garden. Opinion of the first creations of SUNDAY BALLET CLUB. All the regular features and many new ones of topical interest.

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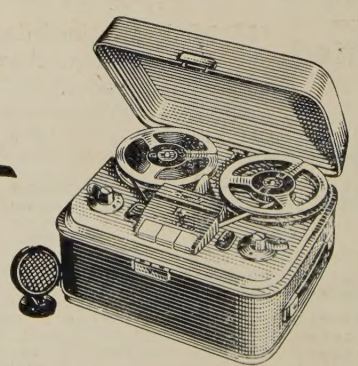

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